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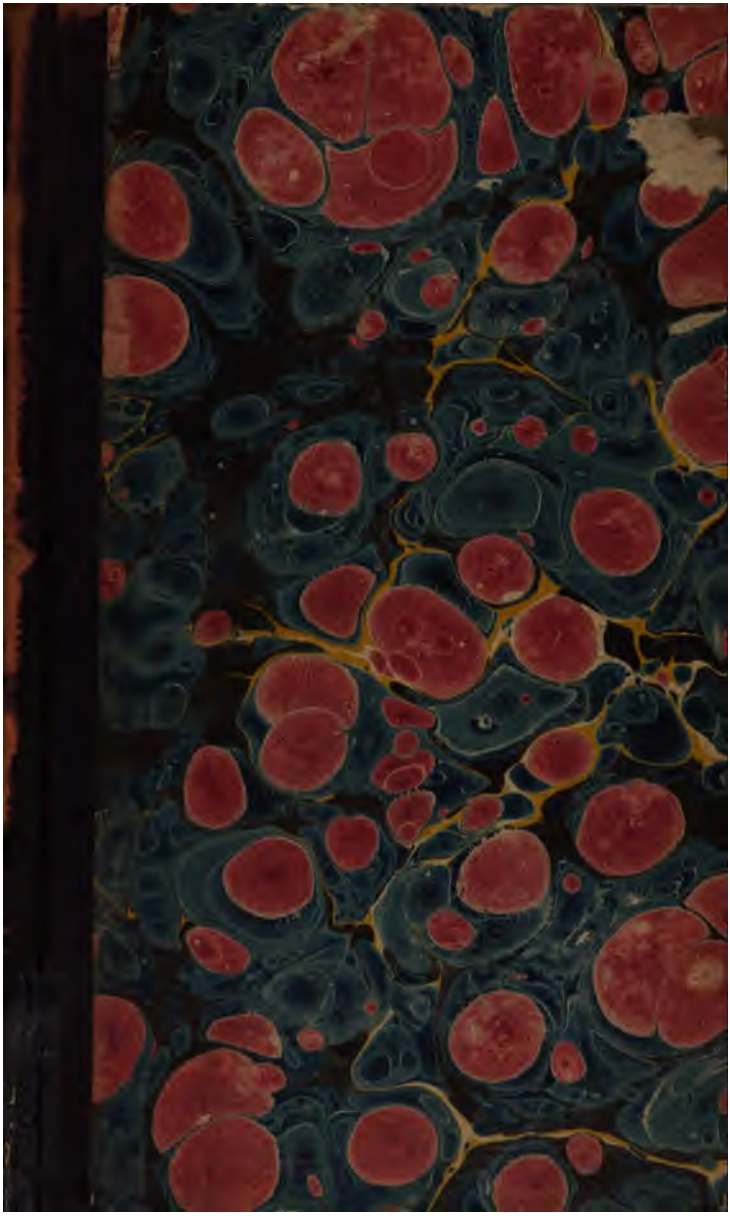

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POEMS:

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MINSTRELSY OF WAR;

WITH

SELECTIONS

FROM

MISCELLANEOUS AND DRAMATIC POEMS;

BY

ALFRED B. RICHARDS:

AUTHOR OF

"CRŒSUS, KING OF LYDIA," A TRAGEDY; "CROMWELL," A DRAMA; "VANDYCK," A PLAY OF GENOA; "COBDEN AND HIS PAMPHLET CONSIDERED;" "OXFORD UNMASKED;" "POEMS, ESSAYS, AND OPINIONS;" PART AUTHOR OF "BRITAIN REDEEMED AND CANADA PRESERVED,"

ETC. ETC. ETC.

LONDON:

JAMES BLACKWOOD, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLIV.

280. s. 160.

PREFACE.

My humble opinion as to how the war with Russia has hitherto been conducted by the British Authorities must not be considered in the perusal of "Minstrelsy of War." The truth is, I hope ere long, to see very different Governments in power. The sense and spirit of the people of Great Britain are, I trust, now being awakened. Suffice it to say, that I regard the war against Russia as sacred and necessary, taking a broad view of the question; and I trust that the confused elements of policy, which exist at present, may be reduced in due time, both to individual patriotism and abstract justice, both to the benefit of universal Freedom, and the good of this land.

For the British People, I have hope—in the gallantry of the British Army and Navy, confidence—and for the rest, necessity, generally

termed the "mother of invention," may in this case become the parent of action founded on truth, righteousness, and principle. I have identified the cause of Poland, Italy, and Hungary with the Minstrelsy of our War. With such this nation must identify herself, or perish. So far our alliance with France is good, as it leads to the discomfiture of Russian ambition, and the union of two mighty leading nations in a just and common cause. But if that alliance lead to an attempt to check American progress, it would be better for England had it never been formed; although I am aware of the perilous position in which we should have found ourselves, had France in the outset declared hostilities against us. As it is, England is being taught the selfish absurdities of the Peace Chimera, and may thus be prepared for the great struggle which is to ensue. Let us hope she will find herself arrayed on the right side. I need hardly add that I have assumed that all this *will* be the case, throughout these Poems.

Not wishing to occupy time or space in a Preface to a work, which ought to have ap-

peared some time ago, in relation to the Poems, whose subjects are of more immediate interest, I will but add, that for the idea, and much of the phraseology of the first verse of the short opening piece, entitled "The Martial Airs of England," I am indebted to a famous passage in one of the speeches of Daniel Webster*. Few things please me better, than to acknowledge the greatness, the genius, and the eloquence in a common language, of our American kinsmen. Once more, with America lies England's most natural, as it is her wisest alliance. Accursed be those dwarfs of expediency, whom aristocratical traditions, that must, sooner or later, die the death—whom a mean jealousy, or the seductions of European tyranny, cause to endeavour impiously to blast this friendship! Already, I see Great Britain thus misled, and therefore ground between freedom and tyranny, sink dismembered and crushed to earth. But, whatever ensue, be it the paramount duty of every independent and honest writer to teach America the

* Let me also acknowledge a line, in the Dramatic Extracts, interpolated from Shelley's "Revolt of Islam," "Nay, start not at the name, America!"

singular want of connexion between the feelings of the people of this country, and the policy of their Governments. Thus, the unnatural strife may be averted even at the eleventh hour.

Great Britain, holding worthily and with energy, her present North American possessions, might have joined the United States in bonds of amity, to keep the peace of the World, to protect freedom, and to advance enlightenment. Great Britain, united with France to check American progress, may be the catspaw of her enemies, and betray, and be betrayed, until the limits of these narrow islands represent, with geographical truth, her real influence over the world.

In process of time, the West will govern the East, and the wave of progress flow back upon the shores of Europe, from the mighty sea-board of the American continent. It must be so, for America is England multiplied on a gigantic scale. To share this greatness, an end must be put to our present anomalous trifling. The fate of Empires is not altogether in their armies and navies; though without these ruin is

' It is so physically—morally it is in a

stedfast adherence to principle. I shudder when I regard London, defenceless and unfortified; but when I think of Poland, Italy, Hungary, Circassia, abandoned by England to their fate, then I am inclined to deem such folly the handmaid of retribution, and apprehension almost assumes the stern features of a just despair.

Many of these Poems contain a contradiction to such thoughts. Hope is a tenth muse, whom every Poet should invoke. Besides, the mischief lies in the few, not the many of these realms. Τὸ δ' ἓν νικάτω is my anxious prayer.

ALFRED B. RICHARDS.

June 6th, 1854.

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MINSTRELSY OF WAR.

THE MARTIAL AIRS OF ENGLAND.

The martial airs of England
  Encircle still the earth,
And roll back to their cradle
  Around a planet's girth:
Her morning drum-beat follows
  The sun in his career,
Keeps pace with all the hours—
  Shall then her children fear?

No! by the swords of Crécy,
  Each cloth-yard shaft that flew,
Our weapons may be alter'd,
  Our hearts are still as true;
Then cease each canting traitor;
  Be Britain's flag unfurl'd
Again to bid, if needed,
  Defiance to the world.

'TWAS ON A ROCK-BOUND COAST.

'Twas on a rock-bound coast,
Where the lost seaman's ghost
His maniac mother sees with straining eye,
I wandered by the tide
To watch the white sails glide
And float and fade, like clouds across the sky.

When, hark! a song I heard!
That my worn heart-strings stirr'd,
As I sat mourning England's blind decay;
While saddest evening fell,
Unto the twilight knell
Of waves thick-darkening at the loss of day.

And thus its accents rung,
Utter'd by unseen tongue, [air:
And seemed to vibrate through the throbbing
Though mournful first, they rose
To triumph at their close,
And chang'd to scornful daring, stern despair.

Was it a friendly voice
In ruin to rejoice?
Ay, by slain Harold's soul! I dare reply,
Better one crash of fate,
Than live the prey of hate,
Or linger dastards, doomed at length to die.

" Ere that Britain meet dishonour,
Earthquakes rend the shuddering land,
And the roaring seas turn on her,
Swallowing the affrighted strand;
Not one wreath survive her wreck,
England's baffled foes to deck—
Not one laurel from her breast
Float upon a wave's white crest;
Let her guardian seas roll o'er her,
Tempests pall, and winds deplore her,
Britain, be no more!

" Ye that follow'd glorious Harry
Hungering on the Frenchman's track,
Fly, sad Shades, nor longer tarry
Grieving, come no longer back!
Rest in peace, ye Spirits brave!
Sleep like storm-birds on the wave,
Or, secure in happy gloom,
Let drown'd England be your tomb;
Let her saviour seas sweep o'er her,
Tempests howl, and winds deplore her;
Spirits, grieve no more!

" Guardian Angels, ceas'd your duty,
Seek ye next a kindred land;
Sunk your island home of beauty,
Bear her charter in your hand!
O'er the broad Atlantic bear it,
But one race is fit to share it:

Bid them rival her in story
Ere old age had dimm'd her glory—
Point where waves are grandly rolling—
Hark! sea-nymphs her knell are tolling
Through the tempest's roar!"

Such were the sounds I heard
While yet night's sullen bird
Wheel'd his dusk flight athwart the shadowy air:
Then a funereal form
Strode past me in the storm,
And beckon'd Darkness from her desert lair.

A TRUMPET-CALL TO BATTLE.

By all the gods of England
'Neath the Almighty God,
The spirits of our fathers,
Their bones beneath the sod;
By patriot saints that watch us
From summer clouds above,
Arm ye who love your country,
If ye be worthy love!

For your liberties are threaten'd
Through means of that long peace

Which dimm'd old Rome's great glory
And palsied ancient Greece:
The sword, in scabbard rusted,
Will fail your untaught hands;
The foes ye might have laugh'd at
Drive back your scatter'd bands.

I do not think so basely
Of Britain in her need,
To deem among her millions
No willing breasts would bleed
For the honour of her women,
The splendour of her name,
To save an hour's disgrace—to guard
A thousand years of fame.

Our men are stanch and gallant
Whom discipline hath form'd,
As when Wolfe fell triumphant,
Or Badajoz was storm'd;
Yet battle makes the soldier,
Occasion fires the soul—
Untrain'd, the noblest racer
May last reach honour's goal.

If but our ancient spirit
Were rous'd throughout the land
How soon re-taught were England
To conquer and command:

The mettle still is present,
But slender the array,
As when outspoke King Harry
On Crispin's famous day.

Lo! there, as if embarking
On some trim polish'd deck,*
Five hundred men stand calmly
Upon a parting wreck;
Yet the fierce waves may only
Bid senseless timbers quake—
Yon living hearts of oak not all
Their bubbling terrors shake.

No voice was heard complaining,
No shriek rose on the air;
Though God, the sky, the shipwreck,
And sea—alone were there.
No succour meets their glances:
While firmly they obey
Their officers' stern voices,
Heard through the blinding spray.

She breaks like some sea vision,
While mast and funnel sweep
Rank after rank, unbroken,
To perish in the deep:

* An allusion to the loss of the "Birkenhead."

But sav'd were child and woman
Within the fragile boat
No soldier's grasp would peril
To keep himself afloat.

Is there a Roman story
That tells of nobler deed?
'Twas not in strife, when passion
Spurs on the crested steed—
Where, 'mid conflicting feelings,
Hope fires each manly breast
To be the heir of glory,
Or seek a hero's rest.

There still is hope for England
When deed like this is found;
There's glory in Old England,
When hearts like these abound:
Rome hath her pillar'd ruins,
Thermopylæ her stone—
Of this (the only boon I crave)
Let brave men speak alone.

Let not their names who perish'd
Be mouth'd with canting whine
By slaves who would disarm us,
Dull bastards of decline;
Whose trading souls sell honour,
E'en at the lowest cost—
Would tenfold such had perish'd
For these that we have lost!

'Twere better for the nation,
Lest lull'd on danger's brink,
Her mighty frame should sever,
Her flag of glory sink:
I often ask why any
Should thus degenerate be;
Still chafes around our island
The same loud stormy sea.

It is an hour of peril,
A season of decay—
Abroad the despot mocks us,
Dark priests at home betray;
Whilst hireling scribes are busy
To sell opinion high,
Our folly unawaken'd
Approves each sordid lie.

Awake! and arm your thousands—
Arouse ye from your sleep!
From tombs of buried empires
A voice breathes o'er the deep:
It needs no fiery squadrons
To battle in the sky,
To tell that mighty England's test—
Her hour of proof—is nigh.

Trafalgar's winds are wailing
Round many a seaman's grave;
O'er Waterloo's dim landscape
Thick-flocking shadows rave;

They mourn o'er unarm'd England,
And curse the coward's name*
Whose birth, not death, Britannia
Weeps o'er in silent shame.

Arm ye, who love your country!
It is not yet too late,
On with your gallant harness,
Then fling your glove to Fate:
I care not for a million,
Were Britain but prepar'd,
Her sickly traitors banish'd,
Her dangers better shar'd.

Ours is a glorious birthright—
Our children guard it well,
Where o'er the western billow
Sweet Freedom's martyrs fell;
That cruel strife forgiven,
We'll battle side by side,
To teach dark Rome forbearance,
And curb the despot's pride.

Our armies on their banners
Shall, with their deeds of fame,
Inscribe that mighty watchword,
The Anglo-Saxon name:

* I need not mention the individual particularly alluded to. "Whom the cap fits," &c.

Our proud fleets link'd together,
In union firm and true,
With their twin flags of triumph
Shall sweep the waters blue.

April, 1852.

THE VISION OF TRAFALGAR.

Methought I slept where Nelson fell,
And from the moonlit wave
There rose, evok'd by some strange spell,
The spirits of the brave.

The spirits of the brave that died
Without a funeral rite,
For England's honour and her pride,
Came gliding o'er my sight.

Each ghost in mourning was array'd,
A sable winding-sheet:
Their solemn voices did upbraid
As each rose to his feet:

Each from the depths of ocean clear:
It was a thrilling sight—
Dull sounds of grief pour'd on my ear
And shrieks of sad affright.

And every face was struck with fear
That, dying, was so bold,
That smil'd upon his watery bier
And kiss'd the waters cold.

Methought I saw the Commodore,
The Captain, and the 'Mid,'
The negro, and the Boatswain hoar—
All whom the sea had hid:

All them whose bones had suffer'd change
In ocean's oozy bed,
Where travel slimy creatures strange
With scales and crested head;

Great eels with saucer eyes that peep
Through drowned ports in play,
And strong-shell'd things that sideways creep,
Like lawyers on their prey;

Where blacken'd skulls, 'mid treasure lost,
Grow sea-weed green for hair,
By tumbling billows sometimes tost
With glistening pebbles fair;

And star-fish, on the rough sea-strand
A thousand miles away;
Such skull the fisher takes in hand,
"God help thee!" he doth say—

"Perchance thy brain o'er many a sea
Hath ach'd with thoughts of home,
And myriad thoughts in search of thee
Have cross'd the bitter foam."

I thought, then, indistinct and vast
Great vessels gan to loom,
Dark hull and shroud, yard-arm and mast
Grew round me in the gloom.

And then a voice was heard to call,
"Is England's might no more?"—
I heard its ringing echoes fall
'Mid caves upon the shore.

"Is England's might no more?" it said,
"And was our death in vain?
And is the daring spirit fled
That brav'd the stormy main?

"And did our blood all idly stream,
That ting'd the dark sea-wave,
As when the parting sunbeams gleam
On some deserted grave?

"And fell our Nelson then in death,
To earn a useless name?
Shall cowards blast with cruel breath
Our hero's glorious fame?

" We gaze on a dismantled shore,
Where strange ships come unhail'd;
The same loud surges angry roar,
But England's might hath vail'd.

" The seaman, once our country's boast,
Dismiss'd, neglected, spurn'd,
Hath sail'd for ever from our coast,
And foreign wages earn'd.

" We see the Frenchman boldly ride
Where once we spread dismay;
For Britain's glory, like a tide,
In shame hath ebb'd away.

" The songs that us'd to soothe our rest
Where we are coldly laid,
Would seem like some sad empty jest,
Since England is betray'd.

" The mermaid sang them round our graves,
In azure depth below,
Beneath the cool pellucid waves,
Where coral treasures grow.

" Those stirring songs of by-gone years,
We may not hear them more;
For England, trembling in her fears,
Hath still'd her lion-roar.

"No more 'Britannia rules the waves,'
Stripp'd by her own behest;
Awake, ah! be not willing slaves,
Arm yet each manly breast.

"No fight disastrous hath been fought,
No conqueror trod her deck;
Her flag not struck, the deed not wrought—
Her soul the only wreck.

"Curst be the sentimental fool
That preaches disarray,
And thrice more curst the hireling tool
Who scribbles to betray!

"And curst be he, whose aid is slack
To gird our native land,
To hurl defiance doubly back
On the invading band.

"Go, shake your rulers up from sleep!
The day approaches fast;
We heard the Spirits of the deep
Speak hoarsely through the blast.

"They told of *Cherbourg's* proud array
And mourn'd our ancient flag,
That from each yellow hulk's decay
Now flutters like a rag.

" ' The fate of England still,' " they cried,
" ' Is in her children's power;
She still may flourish Freedom's bride,
Or fall in one sad hour.

" It is her own to do or die,
To perish or be great;
The shot is cast, the day is nigh,
Prepare ye, ere too late.' "

" By Albion's coast in evening skies
We saw the fight rehearsed,
We gaz'd aloft with upturn'd eyes
On watery fleets revers'd.

" We heard the thunders fast and loud,
We saw the foe advance;
We might not pierce that sulphurous cloud
Though with a spirit glance.

" None, none could tell, save One alone,
The issue of the fight;
The flag that last proud held its own,
Was snatch'd by coming night.

" But this we know, soon comes the fray
Ye may not shun—Prepare! "
Then died the warning voice away
Athwart the sullen air.

And soon I heard a moaning sound
As if through cordage stray'd,
Or when the wind sweeps o'er the ground
Where hollow guns are laid—

All in the rank long grass that grows
By some dismantled fort,
Where rusty cannon shot in rows
Are pil'd for children's sport.

Unto their briny chambers fast
Down sank the spectres grim:
Old Ocean whiten'd 'neath the blast
Of morning chill and dim.

Nov. 1850.

THE DEATH OF WELLINGTON.

I.

Toll for the great departed;
And let each passing bell
From abbey and cathedral
Ring out its deep-ton'd knell.

From village spire and hamlet—
Let all bear solemn part;
The aged oak is wither'd
That grew from every heart.

Set is the sun of glory
That on a hero shone,
To rise but in remembrance—
Our Wellington is gone!

Like some tall ship at twilight,
Seen through a summer day,
Softly, as evening shadow,
His presence pass'd away.

Let England's meteor banners
In heavy folds float low,
For him that never vail'd them
Before her mightiest foe.

A people's prayers are wafting
On high the spirit fled,
A nation's sighs are stirring
The plumes around his bed.

Let Britain's tearful Genius
Gaze on his face once more,
Her sable garments sweeping
The consecrated floor.

In the green leaf of honour
His old age sank to rest;
Fresh is yon crown of laurel
That lies upon his breast.

As when new-wreath'd by Fortune
It deck'd his brow in youth,
Stamp'd with the noble bearing
Of valour, wisdom, truth.

There is a cloud o'er Britain,
A shade athwart the land;
Like marble figures mourning
The sadden'd Hours stand.

Our spell of peace is broken,
Our guardian angel fled;
Dimm'd is the Past's great token,
Since Wellington is dead.

Weep not for him, but England,
Toll for her loss alone:
Death is the latest triumph
Our Wellington hath known.

II.

Sleeps he? And will he waken
To combat once again?
As when he slumber'd calmly
On India's tented plain—

To rise up like a bridegroom
And snatch a deathless name,
The chosen heir of victory,
The certain child of fame.

Sleeps he by duty cradled,
To start to life at morn,
Like some proud god of battle
To gorgeous triumph borne?

No! he will never waken
To drum or trumpet's sound;
No more at clash of cymbal
His lion heart will bound.

But when the loud Archangel
Shall pour his fearful blast,
Girt by the world's great army,
He shall arise at last:

Not mid the first and foremost
Of perish'd glory's van;
The grave still claims the hero,—
God summons but the man.

Toll for the spirit parted—
Enough doth England owe
To him whose star of honour
Hath set in peace below.

Old men shall haste to follow,
And children born this year
Shall boast their cradles shelter'd
Beneath his warrior bier.

Whatever be the sequel
Of Britain's shadow'd doom,
Her Wellington rests calmly
In honour's sacred tomb.

His Glory's rich escutcheon
Hath lost no grain of gold;
Before his agéd body
Returns to dust and mould.

Perchance some bright-helm'd Seraph
His prayer to Heaven bore,
Ere England meet disaster,
That he might be no more.

Yet, were we arm'd and ready,
I would not care for one
To see the challenge given,
The "Tragedy" begun.

Then, in each future war-cry,
Our hero's name should ring,
Then, to his tomb triumphant
Fresh wreaths should England bring.

Then, seen mid clouds of battle,
His bright form should career,
Like Rome's twin guardian spirits,
The sign of victory near.

Toll for the great departed!
Speak out above the knell,
Whate'er his country's future,
He did his duty well.

Sept. 1852.

THE PATRIOT.

(INSCRIBED TO JOSEPH MAZZINI.)

Angel of Earth! to thee 'tis given,
Alone, mid mortals, not to die;
For when thy bleeding breast is riven,
Thou snatchest immortality:
Upon thy cheek the rose of Heaven,
The fire of Freedom in thine eye.

And when men see thee not again,
They speak most of thy presence near,
Nor on thy spirit call in vain
To urge, to rally, and to cheer;
Whate'er thou hadst of human stain,
Is wash'd out by a nation's tear.

The sword or bolt that lays thee low,
While sceptres break, rich gems are sold,
More hallow'd relic still shall grow—
The Past is purchas'd not by gold:
With thought of thee pure hearts shall glow,
When Hope herself lies wintry cold.

Not in sad breasts to be sole-coffer'd,
As now, thy glorious future lot;
For smiling Fate this boon hath proffer'd
To be by good men ne'er forgot:
By tyrants' souls what price were offer'd,
Perchance to be remember'd not?

THE TRAITOR.

(TO THE BETRAYER OF HUNGARY.)

Speak! who hath seen the traitor live
That bade his tortur'd country die?
To him no joy hath life to give,
And hissing serpents mock his sigh:

He dies before his time—a thing
Despis'd, shunn'd, prayerless and alone—
Repentance vain ; remorse, the sting
Of hydras, in a heart of stone.

Mark, how the wretch with downcast glare
Steals forth to breathe sweet evening's breath,
From his damp brow the fresh *free* air
Starts back to caves of icy death:
He mutters in the storm, when gloom
Is rent by lightnings, "Oh! strike here,
Shatter corpse, soul, remembrance, tomb—
Existence is the doom I fear!"

Writhe, Traitor, in thy sleep. Awake!
Pour the vain wish thou ne'er wert born,
With Danäid urn to fill the lake
Of Sorrow, till Hope shriek forlorn:
God, who made all, may still forgive
The myriad Cain thou art. 'Twere crime
In man: kneel while thou still dost live—
Our curses may not outlive Time.

TO MAZZINI,

TRIUMVIR OF ROME*.

MAZZINI, raise thy standard, raise!
And doom each despot's curst decline;
On glorious deeds, on better days
The sun of freedom still shall shine.

The suffrage of all noble hearts
Shall waft thee on the tide of right;
Each hero's soul that heavenward parts
Shall nerve thy bosom, steel thy might.

Italia's land shall hymn thy fame
O'er sapphire mountain, lake, and sea;
Her smiling children bless thy name,
To freedom's birthright born through thee.

* "Triumvir of Rome." *In partibus Infidelium.* Certainly Mazzini, who was Triumvir of Rome, until the monstrous invasion of France drove him away after so gallant a contest, has more right to the title of Triumvir there than a Wiseman has to be called Cardinal here. For the latter is an entirely novel encroachment—Mazzini *has* dated from the Quirinal. But there is this difference, viz., that Mazzini lives in the affections of the enslaved Roman people; while, with a few traitorous or bigoted exceptions, the Cardinal is hated in England.

MAZZINI, wave thine ensigns, wave!
Just vengeance waits thy bidding high;
Or laurell'd be thy soldier's grave,
If midway thou must pause and die.

But no! for soon shall wreathe thy crown
The triumph that deserts thee now,
And blossoms of mature renown
Serenely deck thy thoughtful brow.

The daughters of ancestral Rome
Shall hail thy coming step with glee;
The peasant in his vine-clad home
His deaf sire waken to be *free!*

Break, break yon chains, that rattling sound
Grim echoes from Vesuvio's brink;
Raise Virtue, Knowledge from the ground,
Man was not born in chains to think.

The skies their tenderest blue will shed
To kiss the captive back from gloom,
Black tempests arch the scepter'd dead
Who moulders in a tyrant's tomb.

Each dungeon be the silent grave
Of those, that smear with blood a throne;
MAZZINI, save thy country, save!
Thou *canst* not die, like them, alone.

The sons of Tyranny may fight
In selfish bands—they singly die:
When Freedom's children sleep in night,
A million hearts around them lie.

From Alp to Apennine I heard
The voice that bids thy legions come—
The soul of Venice in her stirr'd!
Shout high! Deep rolls the vengeful drum.

WELCOME AND FAREWELL TO KOSSUTH

(On his leaving England for America.)

All hail to thee, Kossuth!
Rings from the lips of truth—
Let coward despots sleep their night of crime;
For all the world we hope,
In spite of King or Pope,
With march heroic speeds a better time.

Welcome to thee, Kossuth!
The voice of age and youth,
Of man and woman, child in mother's arm,
Cradled from tyrant's frown
Since Herod wore a crown,
Bids thee come here, sav'd from each cruel harm.

A tear and smile, Kossuth!
In joy and gentle ruth,
One for the past—a nation's hopes o'erthrown;
The other for the morn
Of Freedom that is born,
Since thy heart-eloquence her cause made known.

Welcome! We bid thee hail.
O'er thee the genius pale
Of Freedom, weeping, calls thy name her own;
Her name, she cries, is borne
Falsely, and idly worn,
A stale reproach 'mid cunning traitors grown.

From boyhood's happy dreams,
What bright heroic gleams,
Ting'd with their rainbow hues thy waking soul?
Did music fill thine ear,
As if a God were near,
And clouds of glory round thee sunlit roll?

And when thy riper age,
From Shakespeare's hallowed page,
Drew inspiration of our English tongue,
Did no prophetic thought
Tell thee of wonders wrought,
Far from thy home, a stranger race among?

Curst be the hireling band,
That bid us coldly stand
Aloof, nor seek thy bleeding land to save!

Curst be the scribbling crew,
To Mammon only true,
Whose coward hands afar dig honour's grave!

No! England doubts thee not;
She hath not all forgot [bled,
How Cromwell, Hampden, Sydney fought and
For gifts long since bestow'd
On Freedom's lov'd abode;
Thine but the foot-prints of her cherish'd dead.

Nought hast thou new begun;
Thou art but Freedom's son:
Thy mother sank—thou flewest to her aid;
Fate frown'd upon the deed,
Heaven saw thy country bleed,
And angels mourn'd o'er Hungary betray'd.

'Twas but a trial sent,
A transient frown Heaven lent,
And angels mourn not long o'er virtue's woes:
Iris'd with hope each tear
Hangs radiant in joy's sphere,
Like glittering dew-drop in the earth-born rose.

Farewell! Kossuth, Farewell!
Too soon. Yet be the spell
Unbroken, that thy magic accents weave
Round all the beating hearts
To whom thy voice imparts
Sweet hope thy Magyar race shall cease to grieve.

A land now calls thee—go!
Where mighty cities grow
'Mid forests green that whisper Liberty;
Where patriot hearts ne'er grieve,
Nor despot may deceive,
And Niagara's roar bids tyrants die!

Thither his stern, deep eye,
When dark grew England's sky,
Dauntless, but hopeless of his country's good,
Turn'd CROMWELL—there drew breath
The noblest soul* that Death [stood.
Hath reap'd since Rome in ancient splendour

There, blue lake to blue sky
Peaceful reflects on high
The calm of Freedom to the calm above;
There Nature boasts aloud
A destiny more proud,
Than souls are promis'd here that Freedom love.

Not so! Be thou the bond,
In union firm, yet fond,
To link us to our giant child afar:
Then be defiance hurl'd
To all the tyrant world,
When Britain's glory weds Columbia's star.

* Washington.

THE WARNING OF THE SLAIN*.

[Written on the occasion of the apparent hesitation and timidity of the British Government with respect to Russian aggression.]

Not lov'd of friend, not feared by foe,
Shall this be Britain's fate;
For cringing slaves' respect too low,
Beneath a tyrant's hate?

But short while since, on every coast
Her lion voice was law;
The Bear withdrew his growling boast,
The Tiger sheath'd his claw.

Her name in every clime was known,
The watchword of the free;
A shadow o'er that name hath grown,
Like sunset on a sea.

The stormy Ocean gaz'd in pride
On her triumphant brow;
Her thunders shook his rolling tide—
Why sleep those thunders now?

No more beneath each proud ship's lee
Grim Neptune hurrying fast

* The author is aware, that this poem possesses somewhat too great similitude in its ideas and imagery to the "Vision of Trafalgar," which precedes it by a few pages in this volume, but he trusts there is sufficient variety to justify its insertion.

Flings coronals of victory
And woos her in the blast.

Silent those old heroic lays,
The sword-wreaths of her song;
Shrunk are the tame, inglorious bays
That crown a nerveless throng.

The harp lies mouldering on the ground,
Up-hung the shatter'd lyre;
The poet-band are slumbering round
That struck their chords to fire.

Had we been conquer'd in the field,
Or worsted in the fight;
Not e'en in death be taught to yield,
Known no eclipse save night—

I had not mourn'd in wailing verse
The dark decree of fate;
Nor branded traitors with a curse
In burning words of hate.

Late, while dark fancies fill'd my breast,
Ere slumber o'er me stole,
Like tapestry in strange unrest,
A vision scar'd my soul.

Methought I gaz'd o'er sea and land,
And heard a voice proclaim
Each spot where fought a patriot band
For Britain's honour'd name.

And then a spectre crowd 'gan rise
From out the chilling main,
Like hollow gusts of wind their sighs
When dead leaves scour the plain:

And where the grass and waving corn
Grew tallest on the mound,
Dark serried shapes were sudden born
In blood-mist from the ground;

Like shadowy host in midnight cloud
When lightnings lurid gleam,
Methought appear'd that thronging crowd
Of phantoms in my dream;

Until a ghostly moon up-came
As from another world,
And like some pale, uncoffin'd dame,
Her winding-sheet unfurl'd.

Each form then grew distinct and bright,
The vapours downward glide;
Methought in that strange wizard light
I saw each as he died;

Save that their fix'd accusing eyes
Were solemn turn'd on high,
Each pointed upward to the skies
And grieving seem'd to sigh.

Wrapt in torn banners, red with gore—
Ah! vainly was it shed?
Their stern death-smile is lit no more,
Their victor-joy hath fled.

Though girt is every martial thigh,
A blade in every hand,
Great tear-drops from each hollow eye
Weep a dishonour'd land.

And then their voices to my ears
Came rushing on the blast,
'Twas thus mourn'd England's coward fears,
Her heroes of the past:—

"Afar in foreign clime we fell,
Or where the salt wave rolls,
What echo from Time's sullen knell
Hath lied unto our souls?

"And with the news our sleep hath stirr'd,
'England is great no more!'
It cannot be. We have not heard
The battle's furious roar.

"If that a myriad foe her doom
Had borne across the wave,
Until that narrow isle lack'd room
To find them all a grave.

"Had but her manhood only died,
With harness on the back,
And seven days seen the salt sea tide
Run crimson on its slack.

"But oh! to think the precious fame,
Which we so nobly won,
By fitting heirs to sordid shame
Should reckless be undone.

"Ah! wretches wedded to disgrace,
Ah! base and canting crew—
Ah! bastard sinners, impious race,
To Mammon only true.

"Disarm ye England? 'Tis to steal
The poor man's paltry wage;
Ye mock the peace ye least can feel,
Inflam'd with greedy rage.

"We hear, sad work of yon starv'd crowd,
Your shuttles ply no more;
But in their place there hurtles loud
The mighty loom of war.

"Fierce Thor, avenger of the gods,
Hath grasp'd his iron mace;
His crest like awful pine-top nods
O'er some thick burial-place.

"Far in the north the giant stands—
A harvest waits ye there;
'Tis not of corn, but bristling brands
That pierce the sleety air.

"Think ye soft speech or shuffling tame
Will cool his savage ire?
Go, thrust your right hands in the flame,
And supplicate the fire!

"Arm! and command the peace ye crave,
Be warriors once again;
Still o'er our graves let Albion wave
Her flag without a stain.

"Hear not those eunuchs of decline
False philanthropic knaves;
We tell you that no voice divine
Bids Englishmen be slaves.

"Boast your bloat commerce: 'twas begun
But by the bold and free;
In storm, not calm, was snatch'd and won
The Empire of the sea.

"From England's threaten'd wreck now steals
Its gain, yon selfish band:
Your foes' approval loud reveals
The falsehood we would brand.

" In their own country's foul disgrace
Traitors are best alive;
As maggots eat their breeding-place
They crawling feed and thrive.

" So when they bid you scorn the means
To hold your own, beware!
From lore historic wisdom gleans
One counsel, to prepare.

" By that great hero's hallow'd sleep
Who late was laid to rest—
Soon may Britannia cease to weep
O'er follies so unblest.

" The foeman hides his fierce grimace
'Neath preparation's mask,
And smooths Bellona's wrinkled face,
But girds him to the task—

" His task revenge—his hope the hate
Of many a bygone year,
Hell-hounds held back thus long by Fate
In leashes lent by Fear.

" That Fear is fled. The leash o'erstrain'd
Shall burst at one fell sound;
The trading friendship, basely feign'd,
Be worthless flung to ground.

" Then at your throats with one accord
Shall leap with frantic yell
Yon drill'd, insatiate, restless horde,
Like myrmidons of hell.

" Sacred the deed they perpetrate—
Self-murderers no more;
But warriors, bent at beck of fate
To waste a hostile shore.

" Religion, envy, greed unite,
Call'd glory by the brave,
Whose martial music play'd all night
Round Dahra's shrieking cave.

" Think ye not sweeter still your blood
Than that of Afric's race?
E'en tigers have their choice of food,
That ne'er show lingering grace.

" Arm! lest the stern upbraiding Dead
Should in your Senate rise;
Arm! lest the blood we freely shed
Accusing stain the skies.

" Look, how America doth wear
Great Cromwell's glorious boast,
A heritage to proudly share,
Not part with from our coast.

" It should have been a Briton spoke
In Smyrna's crowded bay,
' Come, clear the decks, my hearts of oak,
The despot claims his prey.'

" Ah! thus again be England heard:
'Twill soothe us in our graves;
No more to cruel anguish stirr'd
Beneath the salt sea waves.

" Ah! thus"—methought a gun's loud boom
Dispers'd the rear of night;
Down sank the spectres to their tomb,
I woke to morn's dim light.

But still one parting word did seem
To vibrate in the air,
The ling'ring echo of a dream,
It syllabled " Prepare!"

Such warnings dreamt I in the night
Those solemn ghosts did give;
They faded ere the sunbeams bright
Bade other shadows live.

I would their accents, sad and cold,
Each English soul might hear;
The timid then were not so bold,
The brave were freed from fear!

KOSSUTH'S RETURN.

Not a shout rose to welcome the Exile's great name,
As he sadly return'd to our shore;
Not a breath of the free wind blew freshly his fame,
Which it wafted so proudly before.

In silence and sorrow the hero came back;
For he felt that his bright dream was broken,
As the ship rose and heel'd on her billowy track,
And he brought back no heart-cheering token.

Oh! long gaz'd the Exile towards the bright West,
Till the crimson sun sank 'neath the wave;
Oh! deep rose the sigh from his sorrowing breast,
As he thought of a nation's wide grave.

Wan and pale was his cheek as a slain martyr's wraith,
But his eyes were still lustrously glowing,
Like beacon-fires guiding a lorn shipwreck'd Faith,
When the storms of life loudest are blowi

Can ye wonder that heart should be scarcely controll'd
By the thin hand press'd tight o'er his breast?
Since its precincts a people's whole sorrows infold,
And within it their griefs are comprest.

Soon I thought that his lips broke the silence around,
As the tall masts by evening were shrouded;
Would that sunshine returning as certainly found
Each worn soul by misery clouded!

And I fancied I heard him thus pour forth aloud,
In a voice full of music, his plaint;
Ere his head, in deep prayer, 'neath the midnight he bow'd,
And the Hero was lost in the Saint.

"Are, then, Columbia's sons so selfish grown
As not to heed my bleeding country's cry?
Can they no other freedom proudly own
Than that which blooms beneath their native sky?

"Is Albion sunk so low, she dares not hear
The insults loud by Freedom's tyrants given?
Stoops she beneath her robe, as if in fear
Of gazing at the wrathful signs of Heaven?

" Alas! for thy fair breast, my Magyar land,
Water'd with tears, and red with Cossack hoof—
The slavish aid of Austria's broken band—
If from the wrong'd, the free thus stand aloof.

" Alas! for thee, and for the whole wide world—
The child of Freedom that will own no other,
Down from his bastard birthright fitly hurl'd,
Shall live to hail the lowest slave his brother.

" Our cause was one—is one. Why came ye not
When the dark Russ o'erwhelm'd our gallant race?
Why have ye left on history's page a blot
Not e'en the tears of Angels can efface?

" Great are ye, mighty nations, but the power
Of one ere long shall tremble, haply falling
In the wide ruin of a single hour,
On her own palsied Genius vainly calling—

" For none shall aid thee! Then shall Poland's ghost
Shriek from the summit of thy lofty spires,
And pale Italia's slaughter'd patriot host
Point from their graves to Albion's lurid f---

"Lo! Panic glares around, then cries 'To arms!'
But shrinks back swordless; while the cowards flying
That counsell'd peace, alone spread base alarms—
The best and bravest in the front are dying.

"Lust, murder, rapine—such a fearful tale
Was never told of nation lost like thee
So idly. All the pictur'd Past grows pale
Compar'd with that red living tapestry

"Rising before my vision, like a dream
Of injur'd Dante. May'st thou still take warning,
Great country, and thy weapons' warlike gleam
Dazzle the hosts, thy false repose is scorning.

"The doom of nations is their armies' fate,
In peace disbanded, or in war destroy'd;
So, Albion, spake thy bitterest foe of late,
By martial pomp around him overjoy'd.

"If not to aid us, for thyself prepare
Thine armaments—to glorious battle sounding,
Ere fierce invasion's terror fill the air;
With stern delight each manly spirit bounding.

" Fools at thy councils prating; at thy heart
Th' insidious bigot gnaws and sows dull hate:
Rise, Albion, rise, and choose thy noblest part;
While yet 'tis time to tear the bond of fate.

" And thou, Columbia! be not lust alone
Of tall dominion thine, remembering not
How thou wert nurtur'd—Freedom's child full grown:
Ne'er yet had land so blest and fair a lot!

" Thy limbs were moulded by the grandest soul
A people's voice united bid to Heaven
Sainted ascend, since Heaven itself bid roll
The spheres in music, and to man was given

" The earth to be a garden, not a place
Of slaughter and of hatred. Therefore think
What 'tis ye do, oh daring, restless race,
Ere Albion's blood your thirsting weapons drink.

" 'Tis but the mean are jealous. Oh, what bond
Should ye twain give unto the world together
Of peace and glorious freedom! Union fond,
No human power should have the force to sever.

" Methinks I see your flags triumphant ride
O'er the blue ocean ; Liberty inshrin'd
Beneath them, smiles apparell'd like a bride,
And holds each tyrant's downfal doubly sign'd.

" But if for purpose slight, or greed of gain,
Thou should'st, Columbia, falsely choose ; preferring
To bear the multitudinous brand of Cain
Upon thy brow, from Nature blindly erring,

" A parricide 'mid nations shalt thou be,
If great, yet guiltier than the world e'er saw;
Free ? From the stain of bloodshed never free !
The mad perverter of mankind's great law.

" It shall not be so ! From the darkness round,
Wherever patriot blood in earth ne'er sinking
Has fall'n—where'er of late the conscious ground
A nation's tears with silent purpose drinking

" Hath rais'd a form of mist unto the skies,
The kneeling Genius of a country's woe
By Hope's bright rainbow diadem'd—shall rise
A mighty Spirit arm'd to strike the blow !

" A voice of thunder leaps from hill to shore,
At whose command forgotten prisons falling
Show dazzled captives of an age before,
E'en now, to God alone, for mercy calling.

" A voice like to an earthquake! whose dread sound
Rolls up the echoing vale of distant years,
And bends the impious forehead low to ground,
And blasts the wicked with portentous fears.

" The tread of armies, victors' drums, unheard
Fade into nought before that mighty warning,
As o'er the sea to joyous ripples stirr'd,
And the glad earth, it heralds Freedom's morning.

" Whereat the howling despot hangs his head
With baffled perjuries. The priest in vain
Perverts the living, and insults the dead:
Rome shall not rear her hideous front again.

" There is a silent thought within the breast
Of men and nations. Long it hath been sleeping,
Save in the bosoms of the few, whose rest
Like mine, hath broken been with midnight weeping.

" A Principle of Freedom mild, yet strong,
To lead us staggering from Delusion's grave,
Kindling the eyes with light forgotten long,
With hope to cheer us and with power to save:

" Nought shall resist it! yet who in the van
Of nations, Evil foremost stand defying,
Shall earn the thanks of universal man,
And Heaven itself shall stoop to bless them dying.

" In the lone circle of my prison days
I have thought this, and bided still the hour;
Joy fill'd my bosom with prophetic rays,
Hope budded still, like some sweet winter flower.

" Mourn not for me, my friends. The still small voice
Of Conscience is a flatterer more dear
Than lives in Palaces. She bids rejoice,
And answer outrage with a pitying tear,"

Thus the Exile. Hung Silence entranc'd on his speech,
Deck'd with gems by her dark sister Night;
Till the Morn blush'd to being o'er Albion's near beach,
Whose loud surges broke with the light.

A PEACE LYRIC.

FOR THE NEXT SOIREE OF THE MANCHESTER ATHENÆUM.

Dedicated to all "Moral Bullies," "Canters," "Pro-Russian Quakers," &c. &c. &c.

Oh! there's no use in arming at all—
Let us give all we can to our brother;
'Tis a pity for nations to brawl,
So our old-fashioned notions we'll smother;
Give the foes of our country their fling,
'Tis their turn now to ravish and plunder;
Let it be quite an understood thing,
'Tis an Englishman's pride to knock under.

Bully Br—ght is the man for our money,
With his twin "Moral Bobadil" ranter,
So loyal, frank, sober, and funny,
Just the "Cob," boys to win in a "canter:"
Sing sentiment, soirées, and drab,
Bland Hypocrisy sipping weak tea;
Who'll in speech sidle up like a crab,
May retreat like a snake, sirs, for me.

What is prudence? A thing that costs gold:
What is fame, but a middle-age story?
What is freedom? A name bought and sold;
Talk no more now of Nelson and glory:

Leave the doors of your homes open wide,
Should a burglar be tempted to enter,
You may reason, but never should chide—
Yes, from Nature's first law be dissenter;
Bully Br—ght, &c.

There's "Sir Cotton," who slanders so wildly,
Cheap philanthropist all the world over,
If the French came invading, quite mildly
Would preach from a soirée at Dover,
Saying, "Friends, brothers, do t'other thing,
Pray believe me 'tis cruel to slay man"—
('Twere a blessing such preachers to string
On a gallows thrice higher than Haman).
Bully Br—ght, &c.

"What's your fun coming here? We don't fight;
Asses can't be by tigers invaded;
We have no woundy swords—there, good night;
Lord! we can't have *our* streets barricaded:
We've a true 'moral force,' the Police,
And our goods are all ticketed under;
Buy and sell, never let the job cease,
You and I, boys, we'll pocket the plunder.
Bully Br—ght, &c.

"We have wealth, though unguarded's our coast,
If our daughters attract by their beauty,
Don't come here. Our Army's a ghost,
And our Navy's forgotten its duty;

We have arms made for export alone,
Lots of "Brummagem," none can be finer!
Muskets, bayonets—not for our own
Wicked use; but for Dahomy, China.

Bully Br—ght, &c.

"'Tis the sale at a very low price
Of the whole over-tax'd British nation;
If her enemies take my advice
They'll await her own self-wrought damnation:
What's a Briton to Br—ght or to me?
We've an interest in the whole world, sirs;
Hoist the standard of self o'er the sea,
And the "Jack" of Old England be furl'd, sirs.

Bully Br—ght, &c.

"We're enlighten'd Philanthropy's sons;
What's one nook of land, more than t'other?
Knock the priming from Englishmen's guns,
Let us cheat, but not vanquish a 'brother';
Starve the child, sweat the artisan lean;
We have 'mills' of our own worse than battle;
Useful falsehood—no, knowledge, I mean—
Be the prize of our dull human cattle.

Bully Br—ght, &c.

" There's a great Greek historian, once
Utter'd truth for all times, 'tis quite true of him;
Now a secret I'll tell Mr. Muntz,
'Tis that one single *Times** is worth two of him;
Don't be thinking it dirty and small,
That I butter this falsehood diurnal;
'Tis a way with us orators all,
P'rhaps, in turn, I'll be prais'd by the Journal.

Bully Br—ght, &c.

" There's your poet and good honest fool,
Who prate about Britons and glory;
But your honesty suffers by rule,
And your poet lives only in story:
Give me the hard head and small heart,
With the courage to brazen out fully
What my friend Br—ght asserts on my part,
And the strength of the great 'moral bully.'

Bully Br—ght, &c.

" Give me sentiment, shuffle, and cant
To cram down the throats of the people,
Recitations, enlightenment, rant,
Notoriety tall as a steeple;

* A certain platform orator addressing an enlightened audience upon one occasion, declared, that a single copy of the *Times* newspaper was worth all that *Thucydides* ever wrote.

There once liv'd a *Pecksniff*, I'm told,
A private arch-hypocrite tyrant;
I'm a *Pecksniff* a little more bold,
To public fame greedy aspirant.

Bully Br—ght, &c.

"Let the labourer quit now his work
And spend all he gets and can borrow,
To view here the Spaniard and Turk*,
Though he starve in despair on the morrow;

* The author's views respecting the Great Crystal Palace in Hyde Park were by no means popular. He considered that an Industrial Exhibition in this country should have been confined to Great Britain and her Colonies. America, a young, increasing, and vastly productive country, with enormous undeveloped resources, might, he thought, much more wisely have indulged in such a speculation. England had little to learn, and everything to impart. It is curious that in this great show, where Peace was supposed to hold so large a stake, by far the most important invention exhibited was of a warlike character, and utterly neglected by the Prize Committee. This, it need hardly be added, was the Revolver of Colonel Colt, a weapon destined to revolutionise small-arm warfare throughout the world. Perhaps a still more curious consideration is, that this arm has been the means of introducing into this country machinery of the most exquisite construction—of bringing here American workmen—of fostering a kindly feeling between the two great kindred nations of the Anglo-Saxon race—of tea-

'Tis the last *fête* that England may see,
Is the Great Exhibition of Crystal;
If the lost wretch a suicide be,
Pray what matters the cost of the pistol?
Bully Br—ght, &c.

"From its roof let the glazier fall,
Since workhouse, the gaol and the halter,
Emigration, starvation, might all
Be his fate—let the victims ne'er falter:
Yet sometimes I cannot but think
That the Frenchman our weakness might hit
If it be thus, I'll tip him a wink,
And so be the Judas of Britain.

Bully Br—ght is the man for our money,
With his twin "Moral Bobadil" ranter,
So loyal, frank, sober, and funny,
Just the "Cob," boys, to win in a "canter:"
Sing sentiment, soirées, and drab,
Bland Hypocrisy sipping weak tea;
Who'll in speech sidle up like a crab,
May retreat like a snake, sirs, for me.

January, 1851.

ing us how machinery may be so employed as to be the boon, not the curse of the operative—and, finally, of awakening the dormant energies of a department of the public service, which had become alarmingly slow, and phlegmatically stupid; and here let follow as *àpropos* to these remarks, the following not very elegant or dignified, but somewhat energetie "Chant for Colt."

A CHANT FOR COLT,

TO BE SUNG BY THE BRITISH ARMY.

("The Girl I left behind me.")

SHOT I.

Amid the latest toys of Mars,
Away with shams and cheaters;
Here's England with the "Stripes and Stars,"
Hurrah for Colt's repeaters!
We'll make the Russian bear sing small,
And bid "Old Nick" knock under;
Come, boys, let's quickly ope the ball
And blaze away like thunder.

SHOT II.

They say there's millions up in arms
In Russia and Circassia,
False knaves that try to give us qualms
By telling us we're rash here:
Our British soldiers, one to three,
'Gainst foreigners we back 'em;
But with Colt's pistols, why d'ye see,
One to eighteen we'll whack 'em.

SHOT III.

To *Kalafat* and *Giurgevo*,
And *Sneezeekof-tschishupwisky*,
Right onwards like brave boys we'll go
With bosoms light and frisky:
Charge, lads, we'll show 'em now a trick,
Our precious nobs they've miss'd all;
There's endless music in the click
Of Colt's audacious pistol.

SHOT IV.

The girls we leave behind are sweet,
But glory is still sweeter;
Lord love ye, fighting is a treat
With Colt's far-fam'd repeater;
Says Nancy, "Not so much I fear
Since you've got that six-shooter."
She smil'd and kiss'd her grenadier,
Her gallant six-foot suitor.

SHOT V.

Let Austria join the Russian bear,
America befriends us;
Although the breed she cannot spare,
Her famous *Colt* she lends us:
At Ascot and Newmarket late
We back'd our English horses,

The stake is still the "Emperor's Plate,"
But slightly chang'd the course is.

SHOT VI.

Then fall in, lads, to drum and fife,
"Old Nick" this day shall rue it;
You fought like lions in the strife
With plain "Brown Bess" to do it;
Now since this famous tool you've got,
All rifled, ramm'd and ready,
One more hurrah for Colt's six-shot,
March forward, boys! Be steady!

A NEW DANCE TO AN OLD TUNE.

Come, arouse ye! my brave men of England,
And fight ye a gallant fresh fight,
Just to keep the new world at its level,
And set the old world straight and right;
There is *leather* in *Russia* wants tanning,
And nothing save camps in all France—
Fife and drum is the music I'm planning,
To play up a right merry dance.

We are sick of that vulgar old Cobden,
We are sick of the broad-brim of Bright;
What we want is a soul-stirring "scrimmage,"
Inspiring fresh Dibdins to write;

There's a German* been lately proclaiming
That a war would do good to mankind;
I must own for myself I've no shame in
Proclaiming I'm of the same mind.

Shall a shop-keeping nation knock under
To "Old Nick" and second-hand Nap?
I confess, though it may be a blunder,
That I don't value Cossacks a rap.
What's the use of your pic-nic at Chobham,
If in sniv'ling the matter's to end,
And the powder you popp'd off at *Spit*head,
If you're *spit on* by foe and by friend?

I must say, 'tis a fine thing to bargain,
Swap, import, trade, export, and sell;
But the nation you give but an inch to,
In return will insist on an ell:
British youth had of old a twin measure;
One was destin'd for wool and such gear;
But they took in the other more pleasure,
A cloth-yard shaft drawn to the ear.

Come, 'tis no use, Britannia! to twaddle,
In the end, my old girl, you must fight;
And, though old, to the battle-field waddle,
Or to fame, purse, and honour, "good night!"

* The historian Heinrich Leo.

So the sooner you do it the better;
But first hang those snobs of the pen,
Who, while *Scripture* they quote to the letter,
With *Scrip* cheat their lov'd fellow-men.

You must sacrifice "shop" for a season,
Though "alarming" the pull on the till;
Pray permit me to tell you the reason,
'Tis that others are bent on a *mill*—
Not exactly such mills as are grinding
Both body and soul to the ground,
Whence the orphan's shrill prayer is up-taken,
By angels who gather its sound.
'Tis your foes that invite you to labour
At looms of a different kind,
"Shafts for shuttles," for spindle a sabre—
The description in Gray* you will find;

* See the magnificent lines entitled the "Fatal Sisters":—

"Now the storm begins to lower,
(Haste, the loom of hell prepare),
Iron sleet of arrowy shower
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

"Glittering lances are the loom,
When the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's woe, and Ranver's bane.

And they don't care a dump for your notion
That might is not right any more;
And that *Quakers* can rule o'er the ocean,
As real guns once did before.

There is one thing I can't help revealing,
Though some folk may look very queer,
Who with Mammon prefer peaceful dealing,
(Their cotton souls selling too dear);
'Tis that, though war's a terrible evil,
And a Dutchman* has painted it so;
Yèt that peace sometimes leads to the devil,
And paves a smooth road down below.

The truth is, *with* honour and glory
We fought for the till and all that;
But the knaves who invent this new story
Think of nought, but to send round the hat;

"See the grisly texture grow,
('Tis of human entrails made),
And the weights that play below,
Each a gasping warrior's head.

"Shafts for shuttles, dipp'd in gore,
Shoot the trembling chords along.
Sword, that once a monarch bore,
Keeps the tissue close and strong."

* Rubens.

They would furnish, for money, to others
Pistols, swords, or a "best Sheffield" blade,
They would sell to their African brothers,
Or Chinese, cheap muskets home-made.

Nay, to Britain's own foes they would tender
(With an invoice) the powder* to kill;
And of gun-cotton freely would send a
Large order†, *our* "claret" to spill;
Then before foreign foes draw first blood, boys,
Or we're humbugg'd completely by Rome,
Kick all traitors back into the mud, boys,
Whence they sprung—and *then*, Britons, strike home! [1853.]

* The Dutch, a great maritime and mercantile power, became so corrupted by trade, that an instance is well known to have happened when a Dutch fortified city being besieged, and on the point of surrendering, the enemy fell short of powder. Some merchants in the town finding this out, could not resist the temptation of a deal, and supplied it; so the town being taken, and the garrison put to the sword, they too very properly fell victims to their unhallowed greed. It is known that British merchants supplied the Kafirs with arms and ammunition, during the last year.

† In the conclusion to the preface of the fourth edition of "Cobden and his Pamphlet Considered," the author lately penned the following passage;—"Leonidas, type of patriotism, left a name sacred at the hearthstone of all nations worthy of patriots. Had the men of Manchester been ancient Greeks, they might in the hope of securing a large clothing order for the army of the Persians, have anticipated the sordid perfidy of Ephialtes the TRAITOR."

THE SEA KING*.

I was fifteen years old when my heart beat too strong
In thy hut, gentle mother, to dwell,
To feed goats seem'd weary, the days were so long,
O'er my spirit strange shadows there fell;
How I dreamt, how I thought! but my thoughts were not glad,
As of yore, for my bosom grew heavy and sad
In the forest!

I bounded right madly the hill-top to gain
Far to gaze on the fierce rolling tide,
Whose surges sang sweeter than ever the rain
Rang its knells in the chill forest wide.
Ah! they come, ah! they come from the far shore, each wave
Unfetter'd and free—how they leap, how they rave
On the ocean!

One morning a bark from the shore I espied,
Like a dart she sped into the bay;
Then swell'd high my bosom, it knew then the bride,
Long panted for day after day:

* Translated from the Swedish of E. J. Geyer. For the original verses I was indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Edward B. Hale Lewin.

I rush'd from my goats, and from thee, mother mild,
And the Corsair he took me to live on the wild
Bounding ocean!

And into the sails rush'd the wind with his might,
We flew o'er the billows' ridg'd fleece;
The sun-dazzled surge rose—then fell in deep night,
In my bosom alone there was peace: [night,
My sire's rusty sword quiver'd tight in my hand,
And o'er it I swore I would win fame and land—
On the ocean!

Sixteen summers were mine, when the Corsair I slew,
He had scoff'd at the down on my cheek:
A *Sea King* I trod on the waves' boundless blue,
In the death-game none now found me weak!
Then I took forts and castles ashore with my band,
And with the brave fellows drew lots for the land
On the ocean!

From deep horns the strong mead we merrily quaff'd,
Calm in might, as our storm-couch was laid,
We could swoop, as we pleas'd, from the waves where we laugh'd—
In Walland I took me a maid:

Her eyes wept three days, on the fourth fill'd
with light,
And thus fell our nuptials with sportive delight
On the ocean!

And once I was lord both of castles and land,
And under a roof drank as deep;
For my people and kingdom I took thought,
and plann'd,
While walls, bolts and locks held my sleep;
For the space of a winter that ne'er seem'd to end,
Though king there, yet earth it was narrow and
penn'd To the ocean!

Nought did I, save to my proud soul give offence,
Each helpless wretch aiding to crawl;
To each wallet a lock, to each hovel a fence—
So stoop'd I to succour them all;
What with fines, oaths, and robbery—each paltry
care,
I listen'd to loathing—ah! would I were there
On the ocean!

Such my prayer, till that winter roll'd heavily
past;
Wild anemones wav'd on the shore
Sweet daughters of spring, and the minstrel waves
fast
Pour'd their song, "Hither! bide thou no
more!"

The breezes o'er valley and hill flutter'd light,
And the freed brooks exulting rush'd dancing so bright
Unto the ocean!

Then seiz'd me the former invisible tie,
As the rude waves my name raging sound;
O'er the land and its cities my broad pieces fly,
Crown and sceptre I dash'd to the ground;
And poor as of yore, with a ship and my sword,
Look'd fate in the eyes for the *Sea King's* reward
On the ocean!

Free, free as the wind then our joyous course ran
On the distant wave's billowy green,
And we mark'd on the coast of the stranger how
Was the same wretched animal seen: [man
Care ever sat by him, an unbidden guest,
But the Corsair's proud step spurns her far from his rest
On the ocean!

And again stood I watching my heroes among,
For a sail in the far distant blue,
If a rival bark came, then our war-cry loud rung;
The trader we scorn'd to pursue:
For the brave man by chance of the red fray doth stand,
Whilst his friendship is knit by the lance the brand
On the ocean!

Firm stood I, by day, near the surge-rocking
shroud,
No shade the bright future o'ercast;
Like a swan 'mid the waving sedge blithely and
proud,
Was I borne on the rushing wave past:
Each prey was mine own that my path-way then
cross'd,
And my hopes were as free as the white waves
wild toss'd There, on ocean!

Firm stood I, by night, near the dusk reeling
shroud,
While the hoarse billows angrily cry,
And I heard how the Fate's awful loom hurtled
In the storm shooting fearfully by; [loud
As the ship rose and heel'd, I felt—Such is man's
doom,
Now uplifted on high, now deep sunk in the gloom
As on ocean!

But misfortune's swift flock—I have fill'd years
a score,
The loud surges howl for my blood;
And they know it right well, for they drank it
before,
Where'er the hot strife thickest stood:
This wild burning heart that so long hath leapt
bold
Soon in deep icy caverns below shall grow cold
In the ocean!

Yet I mourn not that brief was the sum of my days,
Swift, yet good, must their course be confest;
To the halls of the gods there ascend many ways,
And the shortest that leads there is best:
Let the waves chanting low now my requiem sing;
I have liv'd on the waves—there my death-couch I'll fling On the ocean!

On a rock's lonely slab thus the shipwreck'd *Sea King*
'Mid the surge of the breakers in triumph doth sing—
In its depths the sea whirls him along:
Still the billows wail on with monotonous sound,
And the light breezes shifting veer playfully round;
But the brave man lives ever in song.

TO ARMS.

Cast the bullet, forge the brand,
Play up bugle, fife and drum,
Burning to invade our land,
Let the haughty despot come:

Man the walls—in Heaven confiding—
Wooden walls, our country's boast,
Let bold hearts within them riding
As of yore guard England's coast.

If, our gallant tars beguiling,
Foemen should our homes attack,
Let us still receive them smiling,
Never let a soul go back:
Cast the bullet, forge the brand,
Play up fife and sound the drum,
Weapon'd be each English hand;
Then, let earth's worst tyrants come.

What, though NELSON calm reposing
Slumber shrin'd in that proud tomb,
O'er his brother chief late closing
Midst a nation's tender gloom,
Round us "ENGLAND, home and beauty,"
Their warm magic still shall shed;
Britons, double is your duty,
Think what owe ye to the dead.

Stand not mute with downcast eyes
On the verge of honour's grave;
Picture the sad ghosts would rise
To reproach one English slave:
Shades would mock us pale and gory,
Wrapp'd in banners for a shroud,
Curse us for their ruin'd glory,
By our shame in anguish bow'd.

Let each breast to fear a stranger
Pant to feel its prowess tried;
Youth heroic woo sweet danger
Fold her in its arms for bride:
All her stanch and true defenders
Arm'd and ready ENGLAND needs;
Hence! ye hollow false State-menders,
Babbling, while pale Freedom bleeds.

Lash the cowards, spurn the traitors,
Counselling accurst delay,
'Tis the self-same, selfish faitours
That the poor man's toil betray;
Preaching, canting, trading, lying,
Cheapening ENGLAND's blood and bone;
Let them hemp for halters buying
Half their base sins now atone.

He, who elsewhere shall betake him,
When the call "To Arms!" is heard,
May the last trump fail to wake him,
Be his vile dust still unstirred;
No man know where he is buried,
None be found his name to tell,
Brief his life and fever hurried,
Slow his death, unknoll'd his knell.

Cast the bullet, forge the blade,
Play up bugle, fife and drum;
Foes who would our shores invade,
Arm'd—what reck we if they come?

Feel we neither fear nor sorrow,
Though a million landing find,
Not one footprint on the morrow
Shall the red waves leave behind.

Hark! what sounds upon the east wind,
With strange triumph greet the ear,
Will not BRITAIN's foes at least find
Courage equal Moslem here?
Hark! environ'd now by numbers,
The brave Turk invites our aid,
Too long ENGLAND's justice slumbers;
Let us quick the foe invade.

Near SINOPE's shatter'd towers
Where the vulture scents his prey,
From the dim sea's oozy bowers,
Starts each night a grim array;
And with icy, bristling fingers
Points beneath the chill moon's ray,
Points to where our fleet slow lingers,
By dull ABERDEEN's delay.

"Unaveng'd our bones still rattle
In the BLACK SEA's wintry wave,
Shrink'st thou, ABERDEEN, from battle,
Not from murder of the brave?—
England, 'venge us basely slaughtered,
In our death your honour dies"—
From that dreary shore wide-water'd
Ruin echoes back their cries.

Cast the bullet, forge the brand,
Drum roll out your loudest strain,
For the hour is now at hand
Dastards would delay in vain;
Gallant NAPIER bears our banner
Once more o'er the salt-sea foam:
Britons! in the grand old manner,
He shall teach you to strike home.

HARK TO THOSE DREAD SOUNDS!

Hark to those dread sounds so heavily booming,
Like the fierce roar of great lions at bay;
See where those giant ships mightily looming
Through the white smoke form in sternest array;
Vain all their force, vain their science tremendous,
If God and right were not rang'd on our side:
Freedom and Justice your bright forms defend us,
Wafting o'er ocean our flag in true pride.

Storms may rage wildly, and tempests loud howling,
Awhile plunge our armaments deep into gloom;
But the Angel of Right calmly reads in their scowling,
The frown of Fate threatening oppression's dark doom.

Weird-like and grim glideth Steam o'er the waters
Spread your white wings, ye huge ships of the line,
Knell out revenge for Sinope's dark slaughters,
The sunbeams of triumph on Britain shall shine.

THE MEMORY OF SIR ROBERT SALE.*

A song of tears and fire!
To weep and praise the brave
Who for England's glory fell,
Her name of pride to save:
Let each proud swelling note
Struck in music from the lyre
Upon the full winds float,
And to the rapt world tell,
That the child of British earth
Hath a twin-heroic birth,
And though crown'd upon the wave,
When he rides with dauntless band
He is monarch of the land,
That his foes insulting gave
To his sword!

* Although written some years since, this poem and the following may not be considered an unsuitable addition to these pages.

A song of tears and fire,
To mourn and bless thee, Sale!
Though thy couch be dimly spread,
And thy star of life is pale:
Since on field red trampled o'er,
Thou didst glorious expire,
And our battle-host no more
Thou may'st in triumph lead,
Still thy name we will adore
Till e'en glory's self be dead,
And the sun of England fled,
And her throne to darkness hurl'd,
And her flag for ever furl'd,
In its stormy ocean bed
Laid to rest!

Yet raise again the song!
To honour too the brave
Who fell, unknown to fame,
In the blood-surge of the wave
Rolling crested through the fight;
When England's shout rose strong
Above that sulphurous night,
With its fierce eyes of flame
Flashing death-lit through the gloom,
As the cannon's dreadful boom
Toll'd its thousands to the grave:
Let us weep their gallant doom,
In our bosoms be their tomb;
Since for us their lives they gave,
Far from hence!

Far from their island home!
They must welter there away,
By the jungle's burning side,
In mute and sad array:
The "Mountain-girdle*" near
Hath no sound of dashing foam,
Or rippling cadence clear,
As around the chalky pride
Of the "Island-girdle" dear,
Where, with spreading canvass ride
Our fleets upon the tide—
No! their English hearts cold lie
'Neath a strange and cruel sky
Far away!

Far away! Far away!
And a thousand homes are reft
Of the beautiful and brave,
That with beating bosoms left
High in hope, warm in blood,
When the mother whisper'd "stay!"
And the father doubtful stood,
As he thought of his own grave,
But not of their young death;

* "Mountain-Girdle," a name given in India to the chain of the Himalaya.

And the maiden held her breath
Till her heart nigh burst with pain,
For she felt she might no more
Those lov'd features wander o'er
With her eyes, whose tears, like rain,
Blinding fell!

Yet once more raise the song
In deathless stirring note:
The western shores along
Let it reverberate
Where in the boastful gale
The "stripes and stars" wild float;
Palsy the Frenchman's hate,
Bend Joinville's pirate mast,
And tell with trumpet blast
England hath plenty of like breed,
Ay, many like thee, Sale,
That shall conquer at her need,
And with thee victorious bleed,
Or, amid the storm-shot's hail,
Smile in death!

THE KHYBER PASS.

'Twas of the Khyber Pass,
Where many a gallant British soldier fell,
As in a magic glass,
A vision o'er me came with breathëd spell.

* * * *

Pale limbs, a fearful crop
  Sown by angry war and death last year,
As they would never stop,
  Pil'd, and heap'd, and cross'd, and strewn appear:
White, horrid faces stare
  From beneath, above, on jagged cliff,
Or deep in hollow lair,
  As in a picture, motionless and stiff:
Jacket red, with purple stain, and cloven cap, and wound
Gaping fresh as when the breast that bore it gasping swoon'd.

Each from his shroud of white
  Glares around with icy, bloodshot eye,
And crack'd lips, open quite
  As in death's last, sobbing, wintry sigh:
Sad resurrectionists,
  Creeping winds unfasten from strange grave
Friends or antagonists,
  Horse or woman, child or soldier brave:
Every instant, as the snow weeps heavy without sound,
Grows on sight a ghastlier thing from the red bristling ground.

Stark, in arrest of fear*,
  See a circled throng with clasp'd hands sit,
As they were waiting there
  Death, that vulture-like around doth flit:
Seeds of life are in them yet:
  Beat the hollow drum and blow the fife—
Shout! to their feet they'll get—
  Seize their pil'd arms and prepare for strife;
Shout for England and sweet home! unfurl their
    colours damp—
They move! they rise! they form! they march!
    with quick and soldier tramp.

Around is turmoil heard,
  Child and woman hurry, war-steed neighs;
Each from his rest hath stirr'd
  Forward! 'mid their rattling, words of praise
Or sharp rebuke resound;
  All the warrior pageant glitters on,
While time-beat rings the ground,
  And twice ten thousand eyes are lit as one,
From under plumëd shako high, bright helm,
    and cap,
Shrill and joyous carols fife, with the drum's
    herald tap.

* Long after writing this I was much struck at meeting a description of a number of dead bodies found in America, sitting in a circle, with clasped knees. They were those of a whole party, which had been starved death, and met their fate in that posture, their cor being dried by the sun and winds, like mummies.

Around, in gorgeous life,
  Panoramic wind the Pass along,
Caparison'd for strife,
  Horse and man, loud cracks the driver's thong,
And swart artillery,
  O'er the rugged path fierce bounding leap,
A glorious sight to see;
  Tramp, tramp, each soldier presses up the steep,
Banners wave, and bayonets dance gleaming in the sky,
With colours old, whose names of pride are proudly carried by.

When came a hollow scream
  As if all earth dismayed gave up her dead—
At once, with lurid gleam
  The idle, rattling arms to earth are shed:
Then no sound comes near,
  Save the flapping of the vulture high in air
Sailing up the gorge in fear
  Lest any living thing might still be there,
And half wrapt in the careless snows, that ghastly wild parade
Sank all again, at stern command of Death in slumber laid.

TO THE EMBODIMENT OF A CERTAIN SCHOOL OF POLITICIANS.

Pernicious wretch, that with the Cretin's grace
Dost from the platform spout with vicious bent
To spoil the breed of this once glorious race,
With "eloquence" by lying demon lent,
Where now were Glory, Honour, Freedom, Life,
Did England on thy treacherous counsels hang,
Still drink, unconscious, deaf to lóud-voic'd strife,
The frothy ferment of thy venom'd fang?

Events now brand thee with continuous lie;
Sweet Peace hath died by ravishment of War;
She must be born anew, ere rais'd on high,
Once more on Freedom's bright triumphal car;
With thine own cotton stuff'd in mouth and ears,
Thou surely now art silenc'd—Traitor, no!
Lest Right should triumph, howl thy basest fears,
And plead the cause of England's baffled foe.

Thou Sadducee, with Pharisaic mask,
Stealing the toll on bridge to nearest Hell,
Whereon thou build'st tall marts with greedy task,
And grinding mills to glut thine avarice fell,
Say now what valiant deed thy dark soul pains,
While cunning Greeks thine odious friendship claim?
The trading Moloch gilds Siberia's chains,
The Quaker smiles on red Sinope's flame.

Thou tyrant's friend, thou perjur'd slave of self,
Thou drab pretender to religion's name!
Who on the altar of thine idol, Pelf,
Would'st cut the dazzling throat of England's Fame;
Curst spoiler of existence' holiest charm,
Though Scorn forbids to spill thine insect blood,
Lo! Britain, rous'd by battle's stern alarm,
Spurns thee forgotten to thy kindred mud.

SINOPE.

With Turkish blood the sea is red,
Incarnadin'd with flame;
But deeper, wider still shall spread
The blush for Britain's shame.

Four thousand true and gallant souls
By dastard deed lie slain;
Each dark wave o'er them hurrying rolls
And shudders at the stain.

But England's vengeance since hath slept,
Cold friend and false ally;
O'er their sad fate have gathering wept
Dim shapes that haunt the sky.

The mountains drear in horror gaz'd,
The white waves curl'd with fright,
The eddying rivers shrank dismay'd,
Pale Evening pray'd for Night.

Methought the news to Old St. Paul's
Came riding on the breeze;
'Twas whisper'd round his mammoth walls,
Like storms in distant trees.

Each warrior starting in his shroud,
Hath turn'd him in his sleep;
"Ah! whence those thunders long and loud,
That vibrate o'er the deep?"

"Is it Britannia's 'hearts of oak,'
That point each furious gun?
Nay, by the 'Duty' ye invoke,
What battle hath been won?"

"No battle now hath England gain'd,
No duty hath she done;
Though on her friends destruction rain'd
From morn to set of sun."

"No floating bulwarks then," they cried,
"Of England's might were near!
Perchance afar her seamen ride,
And distant bravely steer."

" Not so," a solemn voice did say,
" With twice five thousand men,
Close by a British Admiral lay,
Nor heav'd an anchor then."

" Is this the breed proud Britain boasts?"
Each doleful Shade replied;
" Sink coward-white, ye chalky coasts,
That once the world defied:

" And be forgotten each lov'd name,
Which we once proudly bore;
Ah! bubble false of treacherous fame,
So fondly prized of yore."

" Nay, at the council board of state,
There rules a traitor crew;
Blame not, but mourn his cruel fate,
To cold instructions true."

" Had he no deaf ear? speak and say,
When base commands of shame
Stole with fork'd tongue, and lied away
A century of fame?

" Had he those orders disobey'd,
He had been true and right;
Nor thus his country's wish betray'd,
Or palter'd with her might.

" Would he, like Hosier, lurid rise,
To vex the wan moon's light,
With ghosts whose hollow, pearl-fed eyes
Chill gleam through tropic night?

" Or did he reck not of the deed,
That doth applause command,
When conscience speaks a nation's need,
Though cowards rule the land?

" England he best obeys who spurns
The secret hint of shame;
No punishment obedience earns,
Where punishment were fame.

" Yet soon shall stern revenge blot out
Each murderous delay;
Shout, Britons, down the storm-gale shout,
For freedom's holiday.

" See the dun clouds from iron lips
Spread round each death-lit flash,
To mock the slave-god's black eclipse,
'Mid empires' falling crash.

" Stand to your guns, ye Britons bold,
Revenge Sinope's fate;
Or be the doom of England told,
To gild a tyrant's hate.

" Full many a wreath hath Britain worn,
That cost full dear to gain ;
But ne'er before to battle borne
Her banner with a stain."

THE TYRANT'S BURIAL PLACE.

It was a goodly fellowship to be
In death, amid yon countless mouldering crew;
My spirit once in silent reverie,
To find a burial place enquiring flew,

For one, who shed the blood of empires wide,
To feed the craving monster of his mind,
Ambition. Was it fitting by his side
Should lie the frame-work of his murder'd kind?

Upon the green and billowy deep there roll'd
A black dismasted hull ; but one was there,
One rotten oar he grasp'd with rigid hold,
His hollow eyes star'd sightless in the air.

But there was *life* amid the wild sea foam,
There came a huge bird shrieking on the wind ;
That crazy coffin bark might staggering roam,
And thousand living fellows onward find

'Till the blue lightning grave it in the soul
Of some stout captain, hailing loudly "Ho!
Whence are ye bound?" The mighty billows roll,
And darkness falls again—above, below.

So pass'd my spirit to a burning sand,
Where the red sun rose daily still the same,
And cloudless sank—afar I mark'd a hand
That pointed up from a bleach'd human frame.

'Twas the lone centre of the furnac'd plain;
For sentinel, its own round, polish'd skull
Sat cushion'd, plac'd apart in solemn reign,
And seem'd of strange and silent jesting full.

A grim portcullis arm'd with teeth its jaw,
To guard the empty castle, where the brain
Held once its ceaseless revel; and I saw
As 'twere two shatter'd loopholes time-worn stain.

In silence lay it ever! Breath, nor air,
Nor living thing disturb'd its mighty rest;
The blood-red orb, whose slant rays lit it there,
Seem'd the strange shell of some old globe unblest.

And when that wide world's edge drew down the sun
In sullen grandeur rob'd with shadows deep;
I knew still how that mystic silent one
Grinn'd 'mid the gloom of nature's awful sleep.

Thus should *he* lie, until the archangel's hand
Shake in Time's glass earth's shrivell'd dust-like clay;
Before accusing millions then to stand,
His red sight dazzled by Heaven's blinding ray.

BRITAIN, RISE AGAIN!

From her trance of dull dishonour
See majestic Britain rise,
Shrivelling each foul spell upon her
With the lightning of her eyes!
Again her thunders shake the deep,
No more her grim Supporters sleep;
But heard around her sea-girt shore,
Whose booming caves repeat the roar,
A voice of anger shouts "Britannia, rise!
Stretch forth thy right hand to the answering skies,
Quell the proud tyrant who thy power defies,
And be thyself once more."

Martial sounds new glory telling,
Round our island-home are rife;
With deep, grand emotion swelling,
Britain's Genius hails the strife;
And bids with Freedom freighted ride
Her warrior ships upon the tide,

While rainbow'd in the foam-drops bright,
That gem their frowning sides with light,
Is seen the charter of our glorious land;
To dazzling flash awakes each full-voic'd band,
Tim'd by great guns, whose dun smoke wreathes the strand,
Crowning each cliff's tall height.

Many a hot tear forth is stealing,
Many a long sigh forth doth stray,
Bitter griefs and fears revealing
For the lov'd ones borne away,
As yonder white sails slowly sink
Ere evening, o'er the horizon's brink:
Yet none bids them stay, whom Britain calls
To man, at need, her wooden walls;
None wish them back, whom Freedom, Justice claim,
And wounded Honour bids defend her name;
Who arms to strike for England's righteous fame,
He conquers—or he falls.

Unseen weep, deserted beauty!
Children, mothers, hide your pain,
Ye must wait till stern-voic'd duty
Sends your heroes back again;
Though many shall return no more
To gaze upon yon mist-clad shore,

Yet, if they knew destruction won,
Not for a moment would they shun
Death—to lift proud England's flag of glory,
Death—to live enshrin'd in her bright story,
Sinking they smile and kiss the surges gory:
Thus be their duty done!

GOD SPEED THEE, SIR CHARLES NAPIER!

God speed thee, Sir Charles Napier,
Across the Baltic foam,
And guard each gallant mariner
That sails with thee from home!

Would that each bosom daring
Might 'scapè the waters cold;
Grim iron Death be sparing
Of Britain's children bold!

O name belov'd of story,
Brave leader of the brave!
Be this thy bond with glory
To conquer and to save.

'The wild Norse waves befriend thee,
By inlet, fiord, and floe;
The stormy winds but lend thee
Rough triumph's healthful glow.

God speed thee, gallant Napier,
But steer far from the land,
From gulf and narrow bay clear,
From eddy, shoal and sand.

Be Lion in the offing,
But Serpent on the coast;
Ne'er heed dull jest or scoffing,
Be this thy manly boast.

Thou'lt challenge on mid ocean
The foemen one to three,
And hail with stern emotion
The certain victory.

But dash not on their granite
Our English hearts of oak,
'Tis thus the foe would plan it,
To deal a coward stroke.

With fifty fathom sounding
Swoop on them far at sea,
Nor dare the risk of grounding
With batteries on thy lee.

Methinks each curling billow
Should leap to drown a slave;
Let Freedom choose her pillow
Where tyrants fear a grave.

God speed thee, gallant Napier,
By gulf and dark fiord;
On shore, through mists of slander,
Thou bor'st undimm'd thy sword;

Thus, where wild Furies grieving
Loom through the vaporous air,
Their black spells busy weaving,
May Britain's star shine fair.

Thus, may each foul charm perish!
Within that floating shrine
Whose hallow'd name we cherish,
Our warm hearts beat with thine.

Where she now sweeps the water
The Sea-king trod of yore,
And couch'd on purple slaughter
His flag of terror bore.

Where now thou sail'st, brave Napier!
Heroic gleam'd each wave;
But ne'er sail'd squadron statelier,
Or Admiral more brave.

God speed thee back, bold Napier,
Though grey and worn thy brow,
No laurels ere grew brighter
Than those which wait thee now.

April 1854.

M'CLEVERTY THE BRAVE*.

Old England still hath heroes,
By land and on the wave;
And among the best and bravest,
Fights M'Cleverty the brave.

* In thus particularly alluding to the conduct of Captain M'Cleverty, the author is far from wishing to depreciate the gallantry of others, who were engaged at Odessa. Captain Jones of the Sampson, who commanded our division, fought as bravely and as well as England could expect. Still Captain M'Cleverty, who fired the first shot and blew up the enemy's magazine, and happened to stand in nearest, and who on carrying the despatches was cheered by the whole combined fleet, may, I believe, from all accounts, be considered the hero of that day. When off Tangiers, some five or six years since, I was indebted to this gallant officer, then commanding the Polyphemus, for an act of great courtesy; and I may mention that about ten days or a fortnight before the news came from Odessa, while talking to an American friend, about the probabilities of the approaching contest, I said, "The first man you will hear of, when anything decided is done, will be Captain M'Cleverty of the "Terrible."

"Nearer, nearer still!" he shouted
As the red shot hiss'd around;
"Ever nearest to the danger
Shall the ship I rule be found."

As fiery dragons wheeling
Breathe flame in airy flight,
The huge black steamers circling
Maintain'd the dreadful fight;
"Lay her nearer to the bastion"
Were the words our sailor said,
As if in river pleasance,
His bridegroom vessel sped.

But his mission was destruction,
The bridegroom there was Death;
Each felt he might be breathing
Each moment his last breath;
"Keep her in!" loud cries the captain,
"'Till we sight them well on land;"
Firm as rock or sculptur'd marble
Was the glass in that firm hand;

As he stood upon the paddle box,
And smiling cheerful spoke,
'Till the word terrific, "Fire!"
From his lips there sudden broke;
Then England's vengeance waken'd
Like lightning in a cloud,
That o'er some silent city
Hath all day lurid bow'd.

Thus the " Terrible" stood in, 'till
From battery, fort and mast,
Leapt the roaring flames in anger,
Like Etna's furious blast;
'Twas a shot from her that shatter'd
The imperial magazine,
When ceas'd the Russian fire, and scarce
Another flash was seen.

Then the " Lion" turn'd back nobly,
The " Eagle" sail'd away;
They would not touch the vanquish'd,
Nor rend a prostrate prey:
That generous example
I fear right well is lost;
The bear growls o'er his prisoners,
And true men reck the cost.

In praise of England's seaman
The French crews loudest cheer,
To praise a valiant rival
Such spirits never fear;
And I know not, if most glory
Of that day be not due
To our gay ally the Frenchman,
With chivalry so true.

Old England still hath heroes,
By land and on the wave;
'Tis hard to be the foremost,
Where all alike are brave:

God prosper still our country,
And guard her through the fight,
And shield our gallant sailors,
The right arm of her Right.

WHAT SOUND IS BORNE? 'TIS VICTORY!

(AN ANTICIPATORY ODE.)

What sound is borne upon the eagle wing
Of the strong North wind battling with the waves,
Dark-shadow'd by his grim approaching flight,
Then lifted flashing in tumultuous light?
What mighty tidings bring
The summer breezes free to this fair land,
Where dreamy Neptune old,
Low murmuring in the ear of listening caves,
His white beard rippling to the yellow strand,
Softly the favour'd shore of Albion laves?
What music doth lorn Silence sudden fill,
As the tir'd storms their cloudy pinions fold
On chalky cliff and lilac-tinted hill,
A gorgeous pall deep-fring'd with fiery gold,
Crimson, and purple, through whose curtain seen,
Pictur'd beyond in fresh and dewy green,
The sun-lit landscape lies?

Speak, o'er the stretch of wide sheep-tinkling
down,
Unto the thick smoke of each populous town,
What voice triumphant flies?
What sound is heard? Tis "Victory!"
Champion, defendress of the right,
Still rules Britannia o'er the sea,
Enthron'd in warrior might.
Oh, brighter than the gems of night
Are Victory's sparkling eyes,
And pale the roses' blushing light
Near her warm cheek that lies;
When Liberty and Justice bless
The sword whose gleam brings happiness;
And quicken'd pulses throb around,
With hope, at war's terrific sound;
When nations fling away their chains
To press around the conqueror's car,
And slaves forget their frozen pains
To hail with song his welcome star,
Whose hallowing rays soft light the tomb
Of each slain martyr forth from gloom,
And gild, afar from tyrants' rage,
The cradle of a new-born age.

From caves of ice-mail'd Thor,
Where the barbaric war-god deep hath fled,
Amid the tumbling breakers' hollow roar,
And hides his sullen head;

Where trembling mermaids thickest sea-weed
spread,
And shrieking fly the seaman weltering dead,
That seems to feel with blind and horrid care
His winding way to their dark grottoed lair,
A loud voice wailing like a wounded bear
On his fast-melting raft quick southward
borne;
Or like the groan of great pine forest torn
By hurricane, comes near—
Telling of England's triumph dear,
Of Russia's wild affright,
Of tyrant doom'd to set in blackest night,
Of fierce oppression hurl'd to deepest grave,
And bids each time-bow'd, rusty-shackled slave,
Stand in the sun upright.
Cease! let us mourn awhile the brave,
The gallant and the true,
For some sleep 'neath the rolling wave,
Or tranquil waters blue;
And sunken forms lie fading cold,
That fought for us in life,
Whose proud hearts throbb'd with rapture bold,
Unselfish through the strife—
Who, who are they with sad, slow pace,
A black funereal train?
No prisoners of a conquer'd race,
They mourn the untimely slain:
Pour, hautboys, pour your melancholy strain,

'Till it float far in faint, yet solemn dirge;
Let your wild notes die out in cadenc'd pain,
Like some lost sea nymph's wail through autumn surge;
Far off it falls; we hear it not again—
Nor these the lov'd one's voice.

Rejoice! rejoice! rejoice!
See like Minerva by the side of Jove
Fresh from the rout of Titans down the steep
Of green Olympus' tempest-shadow'd brow,
Crown'd by the fir plumes tall of ebon grove,
Whence still anon, the lurid lightnings leap,
Now harmless, and deep thunder rolls around,
Britannia calmly smiles,
From gleaming casque her hair unbound
With braided tresses sweeps the ground,
As first to Heaven she kneels in reverence low:
See! there she welcomes, o'er the swelling tide,
The proud approach of each war-shatter'd prow,
As her white fleets victorious homeward glide,
While doting Neptune clasps his warrior isles;
No cry of lamentation lingers now,
But deafening cheers from millions round arise;
No more in anger sounds the cannons' roar,
Whose booming echo strikes the answering shore,
Then far away in distant muttering dies;
No more, no more is heard the sharp fierce ring
Of shotted gun, no more the rattling drum

To arms beats loud; but countless myriads sing
A people's pœan, as their champions come
Triumphant o'er the wave—
Hark to the welcome of the brave!
"Long for herself Britannia fought,
She gain'd the liberties she sought,
And now beneath the smiles of Heaven,
That boon to others she has given;
Rule, mighty nation o'er the azure sea,
And in thy freedom may the world be free."

END OF PART I.

PART II.

SELECTIONS FROM MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

DEATH AND THE MAGDALEN.

La jeune Fille. Fantôme! que j'abhorre,
Tu me poursuis toujours—
Mourir sitôt! encore quelques jours,
Encore quelques jours!
La Mort. Donne ta main, ne tremble pas,
Ma main est celle d'une amie;
Tu vas dormir entre mes bras,
D'un sommeil plus doux que la vie!

In a sick room's poverty,
Hard a broken casement by,
Near which tall and spectral trees
Shiver in the chill night-breeze;
Such as by some mansion lone
Link'd with Murder's tale have grown—
Sleeps a young girl wearily,
O'er her wan face flit strange fears,
The ashen trace of tears
Defiles her hollow cheek:

In disorder'd dream
Her light tresses stream
All about her pillow,
Not in fairy freak
But like the heavy willow
O'er a pool of woe,
Sad it is to see
Her neck's sharp tracery
Shadow'd deeply so
By the dim light in the room,
Like her dying into gloom.

Suddenly the moon stole there,
Threading fast her shadowy hair
Into silver brightness rare,
Mist-like floating with soft grace
Round her wan and pearly face;
And I saw a bright red streak
On her eyelids, on her cheek;
But her lips were pale and lurid
As a Lily from the earth
Sprung in slow and sunless birth,
All in dark, cold shadows buried—

Then I knew the Maiden's doom
Fading early to the tomb.

Whilst I watch'd her troubled dreaming,
The cold moon-beams o'er her streaming,

As in some old Cathedral pile
The tinted light through Oriel window dies
On pale, recumbent effigies,
Or an ocean-pebble dries
In the sun, all colour flies—
And her cheek so white is gleaming,
So wan, so hueless—for a while
You might fancy she'd arise
At once, and from that room
Unto the Churchyard pass,
Poor, pale Ghost, mid the grass
Of the graves to glide about,
As if searching for a tomb,
In and out, in and out,
Flashing slender through the gloom!

I thought she did wake up!
And her blue eyes' wandering light
Grew quite grey and mad with fright—
What is it doth her appal?
There is no shadow on the wall—
Lo! a Shape stands near her,
Not with ministering cup,
Not with words to cheer her,
But a thing of horror
As 'twere waiting for her,
Saying, "I am Death!
Give me then thy breath."
Rattle! Rattle!—"To these arms,
Woman, yield thy faded charms."

"Life! oh, life!" she cried,
"I will not be Death's bride—
I have a lover new
Of earth comes me to woo."

Then the flutter of her heart
Hurries into beating,
With a dull and muffled sound
Each stroke a hunted creature's bound!
And her quivering lips apart
Into sculptur'd anguish start;
In the pale moon's wintry beam
You might have seen her bosom striving,
Like your own in fearful dream,
Or a snow-wreath tossing, driving,
And her breath so fleeting
Might be heard in choking sob, and cry,
"I am too young to die,
So young to die!"

Then the Figure did deride her,
And his lasting grin grew wider;
A tremor o'er the bones did pass,
Heard like serpents in parch'd grass,
Or as shuddering ice-plains creep,
When the dim seas break their sleep.

As a mighty giant bell
Raging in his deafen'd cell
Ilding quick with iron knell

For a plague-infected city,
Smote the voice upon her ear,
Hollow, hollow, and so clear,
Angels, aid her for sweet pity!
There is no one near.

Still more nigh, still more nigh!
With no one near to call,
And farther fades the wall
And more dull seemeth all
To her staring eye—
Save the spectral trees so tall
That heavily wave by,
Like hearse-plumes on a pall.

"What hast thou to fear in me?—
Speak, what charms hath Life for thee?
Are thy living life and breath
Not more frightful still than Death?
And the Spectre of thy youth
Ghastlier far than mine in truth?
Is the dark street's wintry doom
Not more chilling than the tomb?
Do not all mankind deceive thee?
Still betraying, none believe thee—
Can'st thou number father, mother,
Faithful friend, or sister, brother?
Hast thou friend like me on earth?"
Fast and furious grew his mirth;

And the monster's ribs did rattle
Sharp and cold, like steel in battle,
Whilst his blotted, deep eye-caves
Clos'd as quick as poor men's graves,
When fierce Want is nigh,
Then open'd horribly
In the strange and wicked light—
Moon! why shinest thou so bright?

Hear the poor girl speak again,
Each word tears her side with pain.

"Let me, let me only live,
Still to me the sky is blue,
And these flowers, oh, they give
E'en for me their incense true"—
As she spake, the sigh of Death
Shrank the flowers, her last fond care,
As they felt his blistering breath
Curdle in the ghastly air—
"Oh, the fields, they are so bright!
There was something whisper'd, soon
I might wander in the light
Of the sun through fields at noon;
Then my thoughts to God I'll give,
Let me, let me only live!"

Suddenly, Death grew less stern,
Soon his form to air doth turn;

And the shape that did appal
Seem'd but shadows on the wall
Of a naked poplar there
Twirling in the gusty air.

Hush! an organ-strain doth fill
Soft as flutes the chamber still;
'Twas like memory of sound
To fond souls that love;
It rose from out the ground—
From beneath, above,
Until that lone, lost creature felt
The icy horror round her melt;
Soon fled all her ghastly fears
And her dim eyes fill'd with tears
Like forget-me-nots in rain
Deepening into blue again;
And she knew how sweet it was to die,
To leave this world of pain,
Of shame and earthly stain,
And she cried, "Death! wherefore dost thou fly?
I am not young to die:
Oh! let me die!"

Soon a Form stood near,
Not of woe or fear;
But of semblance bright,
Waving in the moon's sweet, silvery light,
And its face look'd like her brother,
Youthful sister, father, mother,

Him she lov'd, ere sin had known to breathe
On her sweet girlhood's bloom,
Or shed one rose-leaf from her early wreath
Of innocence, upon the tomb.

Then flush'd the dying Maiden's face
A smile of such enchanting grace,
As when the beating heart is blest
With praise from lips we love the best;
Like the Spirit's grow her eyes,
As the life within her dies—
Like a halo streams her hair,
As she breathes a thrilling prayer:
"O God! O God! forgive;
I would not, would not live!"

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* * * *

Gone is the burning spot
On her pale cheek that fed,
Her eyes wild light beams not,
Her broken voice is dead—
The night wears slow, with sighings low
Strange shadows come and fly
As in the breeze the spectral trees
Uncertain tremble nigh:
To her feet soon stole
The silvery bowl

Of the moon, that kiss'd before
Her amber hair
So brightly there;
But the Maiden will stir no more.

Hush! I hear the aspen leaves,
Or the sprite that in them grieves,
Whisper in the shadowy air,
"Death is come and gone!"
Hush! I am alone
In that sick room's poverty:
Farewell! sister fair,
Thy faint life hath flown,
Yet how sweetly, tranquilly,
Wonder ye that dare!
'Twas her heart betray'd her,
Her sad life hath paid her
Foul impurities:
Hot and bitter tears,
Cold and ghastly fears,
Ere alone she dies;
God will never judge her
As her fellow-sinners here below,
Though they wrought her woe,
Seraphs will not grudge her
Room mid serried rank and shining row,
Thither she will go!
To a bright glad sphere,
Far above in the blue spangled sky
Angels singing waft her soul on high—
Proud ones, do ye hear?

A WORLD-HYMN.

A hymn of praise to God!
Behold, I wondering kneel
In silent thought alone
Beneath the purple swimming sky
That in deep soft repose,
Like the blue eyes of angels myriad-woven,
Floats, nature's sunlit altar high-o'erarching;
Or like a waveless ocean spreads
Its clear depths far from human ken or sorrow;
And as I kneel, a voiceless song ascends
Of praise from one weak earnest human soul
Unto the mighty Giver!

With me in concert sing
The tiny trembling occupants
Of each green living spray
That waves itself with whisperings harmonious,
The dash of fish that leap
With joyous cadences
From out the mirror'd and pellucid waters,
Making bright pearl-shower'd wreaths mid silvery [mist
And orient diadems
Snatch'd ever by the twinkling hands of braided [nymphs
Unseen by dim-ey'd mortals;
The fountain's sparkling madrigals,
The spirit-hum of flowers,

All, all ascend to Him, whence life descendeth—
God, the eternal Giver!

And weaves its song with mine
An orchestra of insects myriad fluting
With the soft fraying of the credulous grass,
That to the light winds' changful sighing note
Bends in new listening life-like wonder ever,
The cry of every living gladsome thing,
The giant murmuring of towns
Which distance purifies—
Behold! they lie afar;
My soul remembers all their weary crimes
But as an idiot's story
Told when my careless boyhood laugh'd to hear it,
Or as the shapes in clouds of yesterday,
Or like the dreams of night when golden sunshine
Chaseth blind melancholy;
And now unto my bosom's echoing song
This doth lend also its wise solemn strain
There deepening bright and holy.

A mighty hymn to God!
Leave all your hero-worshipping
Of men that idly spin their little web
Of tangled tortur'd framing;
Quit yon tall spires of stone
The sad extinguishers of Reason's flame
Where'er her pale light flickers through the city;
There Mammon blindly gropes beneath high
Heaven

With petty blasphemy in vain blaspheming;
There the dull riddle of Religion's face
That angels drop no softening tear upon,
Is seen to darkly ponder:
Behold! by these unfetter'd
On earth I kneel alone.

Come near, ye slow and evil worshippers,
Is not the glorious earth a house of prayer
Better than human houses built of stone
When the mind faints and wanders?
Doth not the morning sun
Light all the world to daily orisons,
And the sky's vast cathedral dome
Stand frescoed with the form of Truth sublime
And Mercy roseate-finger'd?
Do not the winds mysterious whisper faith,
While silence in the desert loud proclaims it?
Hark! how the rolling waves eternal chant
Their old Chaldean worship:
See, where the wingëd lightnings zigzag write
Their living sentences on walls of cloud
To the dead hearts of trembling men that creep
With grovelling purposes.

A Temple of bright Song!
Beneath night's high and jewell'd canopy,
The white-robed seraphs guide each several star
On flashing thrones through purple space appear-
The archëd forests shall our pillars be [ing:

Deep groin'd and fretted by no workman's hand,
Save the invisible hand
Of all-pervading Nature;
While mid their listening leaves
Deep, solemn shadows fall,
That are not known above where Heaven's floor
Is pav'd with the slant beams of far-off suns,
Such as we may not picture;
Light is God's shadow there—
In which my frail soul, hid in its dusk cave,
Yearns to bathe, soaring as the unseen lark
That in the sky's blue radiance like a dream
Melodious doth linger.

A Pyramid of Song!
The earth doth never falter,
The giant mountains nearer bring to Heaven
The deep low valleys' distant murmuring,
And the skies stoop unto the mountain's chorus:
Man is as nought—a speck on nature seen—
But as I kneel there ring sweet, solemn strains
Of the whole earth sublimely carolling
Her panoramic song of praise around;
That in the narrow prison of this breast
Strike a small answering key of echoing gladness;
Like to the tinkling of a sheep-bell heard
In faintest, purest harmony afar
Borne o'er the bee-suck'd heather when the sun
Bringeth the sapphire morning.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE MR. JUSTICE TALFOURD.

Fall'n is the tree that grew indeed full straight,
And withered is Apollo's laurel leaf *;
Talfourd is dead, who living knew not hate,
And dying fills the world with tender grief.

Yet say, if Death, disguis'd in friendliest form,
Hath e'er pronounc'd less mortal doom than this,
With words of mercy on his lips still warm,
To be led forth, unpain'd, to endless bliss?

Weep, sad survivors! Elia† mild rejoice!
O'er Asphodel what well-known shape there moves
Spirit-like to thee, and what well-known voice
Eternal right to genial friendship proves.

* The reader will doubtless recognise the avowed plagiarism the author has committed in these two first lines. They are slightly paraphrased from a well-known passage in Marlowe's "Faustus;" and their better application may be deemed, at least by friendly critics, a sufficient excuse for the appropriation.

† The name which Charles Lamb was in the habit of appending to his writings. He was one of the late Judge's most cherished earlier friends.

His question now is answer'd—ye *have* met*
Again, and shall meet others left behind
On weary road; when in God's time shall set
Their life's frail star, a brighter sphere to find.

Take comfort, ye who knew him—oft revolve
His virtues, meek simplicity of heart,
So fast inwoven with pure, high resolve;
In thought an Angel—Man in life's firm part.

In him were blended with a curious care,
Philosophy and purpose, justice, love;
Christ's own commandment gave the picture rare,
Discreet, yet guileless as the emblem'd dove.

Too soon for others, not for self, his death;
He saw not in fierce war-pangs England bleed:
Shall we mourn less the minstrel's parted breath
Whose song had guerdon'd every noble deed?

Fall'n is the tree, whose blossoms rich are shed,
Whose glorious fruit is garner'd; but the leaf,
The laurel leaf of Phœbus is *not* dead;
Softly it shades the pensive brow of Grief.

* "We shall meet again,
Clemanthe!"
Vide one of the most beautiful and popular passages in "Ion."

Type of that better wreath pure Spirits wear
In Heaven, on Earth a lasting gift it shines;
The fragrance of his living soul we share,
And feel immortal, as we read his lines.

ON REACHING HIS TWENTY-SIXTH BIRTHDAY.

My five-and-twentieth year hath swiftly flown,
And I, alas! no nearer Heaven have grown,
Than when a child I lisp'd just like the breeze,
Or thought the bright moon touch'd the forest trees.

And yet I've learnt 'mid sorrow, care, and strife,
To reel less wildly through the masque of life;
By his own torch to read the doom of Love,
And label Friendship with her price above.

To mark the worldling toss'd upon the sea,
The crested foam of dark eternity,
Dash'd 'gainst his brother atom, still grimace,
And to mean worship trim his recreant face.

Yet still the stars in truthful orbits roll,
And Hope lives frescoed in the sky's blue scroll;
And Conscience' shining legions ever fight,
Waving her flag in God's own pillar'd light.

Live on, thou trembling heart! in praise below;
Beam on, ye myriad stars! in radiant glow—
Earth's joys shall point where purer joys are found,
Her tears but halo your bright homes around.

Feb. 17th. 1846.

STANZAS.

The price of Grief is but a tear.

The price of Grief is but a tear,
It costs no gold to mourn the dead;
The human vulture comes not near
The clay-cold form, when life has fled;
But if a true friend o'er me weep,
Methinks 'twill rouse me from my sleep.

For living, I have found that all
Bears still its price upon the earth;
Each sympathy is weigh'd out small
For precious drachms—or grief, or mirth,
Ye have them both, as ye can pay
Unto your grinning fellow clay.

Where, Love and Friendship, do ye hide?
I have not found you on life's path;
But some torn blossoms scatter'd wide,
Frail minions of the tempest's wrath,
Unto my bosom sad I press'd,
And deem'd an instant I was blest.

But Fancy deck'd the worthless things
In rainbow hues that might not stay,
While Time or Falsehood lent them wings
To flutter far from me away;
Still are my joys and griefs mine own;
Half way through life I am alone.

And when my joy and grief are o'er,
The only constant thing to mourn
These lips that idly sing no more,
Should be some effigy forlorn,
A monumental prayer in stone—
Nay, be remembrance e'en mine own.

Scatter my ashes to the wind!
In nature's part I'd nobly play,
My grave, 'till call'd, in life I'll find,
And bring fresh youth, and spurn decay:
My soul shall with the friendless sleep,
And with the poor my sad voice weep.

A PRAYER FOR THE WILDERNESS.

To be upon the shores of some great lake
  And gaze on human sorrows from afar;
One daily prayer from Nature's page to take,
  Alone, beneath the forest sun or star:
To dream of all the puppet-tricks of man,
  As 'twere an Angel touch'd with softest grief—
Oh, such, ere all life's sands in twilight ran
  To their sad end, should be my blest relief!

To die within a city were a curse,
  Without once thinking straight up to the sky,
To be borne forth within a rattling hearse
  With no grand, solemn, peaceful silence nigh:
I thirst for Eden in a desert land,
  Where God still walks in gardens He has made,
Where virgin Night kneels low with folded hand,
  And Joy primæval smiles by Morn array'd.

THE CONVICT'S ESCAPE.

The following ballad is founded on a story, which appeared, two or three years since, in the public journals, headed "Affecting Incident."

'Twas a convict, wan and weary,
  By his fears like *gendarmes* press'd,
In a latchless cottage peering,
  Thus its inmates poor address'd;—

"From the prison of the city,
Yonder city of Toulouse,
But three hours since fled I wildly,
Leaving fate my road to choose.

"In strip'd dress and shackles heavy
Work'd I with the negro's toil;
Once I stabb'd a proud oppressor,
'Gainst his wrongs my blood did boil.

"He had wrong'd my only sister,
And the evening that she died,
When by accident I met him,
Call'd me peasant—said I lied!

"I was poor and he was mighty—
For a moment chang'd our fate;
In the dust he lay before me,
Wreath'd my lip with scorn and hate.

"I was poor and he was mighty,
Soon they rush'd unto his aid;
Kind hearts mourn'd o'er the betrayer,
Cold alms buried the betray'd.

"I to prison quick was hurried,
Met the Court's indignant gaze;
And, though young, was sternly sentenc'd
Thus to pass my frenzied days:

" With huge shackles heavy clanking,
Toiling unredeem'd by Time,
Breathing 'midst a crowd of wretches,
Wearing human masks of crime.

" I was twenty, now am thirty,
Since this death in life began;
Yet I mark'd not, save by seasons,
How the dull grey moments ran.

" Since that time, perchance in battle,
Children guiltier far than I,
France hath lost; ah! why in glory
Did not France free me to die?

" For the bullet strikes the peasant
And the noble with like blow—
Elevates the humble peasant,
Lays the haughty noble low.

" Six months back, I dreamt I hurried
From the city's opening gate;
Breath'd the free air of the heaven,
Danc'd and sang with joy elate.

" To my sister's cottage wander'd,
Saw the vine hang round her door,
Saw the trees before the auberge—
All was as it was before.

" From the door she leant—the evening
Sunbeams kiss'd her auburn hair;
She was singing an old ballad
Of gay knight and maiden fair.

" And I thought that Henri, Bertrand,
Comrades of my earlier hours,
Brought her laughing, talking, smiling,
Garlands of white perfum'd flowers.

" Such as when a child I gather'd
In the château's brambled moat,
Ere upon my young life's pages
Care one crooked letter wrote—

" 'Twas a dream; but from that moment
Fiery thoughts of freedom burn'd
In my breast: my sister beckon'd
Wheresoe'er I sighing turn'd.

" With a file, right through my shackles,
Night by night I work'd amain;
If I tir'd, sat Freedom near me,
' Work,' she cried, ' I'll cure thy pain!'

" How I sped, no matter—see me
Here with wounded hands and sore,
Give me bread and give me shelter,
Until night my flight be o'er."

As he spoke no answer came there
From the group within those walls;
But a sob of murmur'd pity
On his quicken'd hearing falls.

Still no word said "Enter, worn one,
Take thy humble seat and meal:"
It was strange! since poor ones ever
For each other's sufferings feel.

And I'd rather, 'mid the lowest,
Beg small alms from door to door,
Than where courtly grandeur pious
Sweeps with Sabbath train the floor.

"Friends," the convict's voice deep falter'd,
"Ye have pity—ye are kind;
Dark your chamber is; yet warmer,
Than outside the biting wind.

"Give me token I may enter,
Speak one word of greeting fair;
Move ye not? Speak, aged father,
Spell-bound in that old arm-chair."

Hoarse and sad and deep the answer—
"Enter 'neath this bare-wall'd shed,
Food we've none, and soon will shelter
Be denied my sick girl's head.

"Far my son for glory fighting
Dies perchance as thou hast spoke,
Three small children and a wife he
Left with us two aged folk.

"Enter, thou art welcome, tir'd one,
Till to-morrow's cruel dawn:
Bread we've none, alas! to give thee,
Not one rag to sell or pawn."

Then two little children starving
Hurried to their grandsire's side,
Not from fear—they were too hungry,
But the stranger upward ey'd.

"Grand'ther," whisper'd one, "do you think he
Brings us food?" "Hush, child, be still!
Sir, our landlord on these children
Sternly wreaks a cruel will.

"I am old and useless, ready
Forth to wander o'er the plain,
With my wife, yon aged woman,
We have liv'd through many a pain.

"But my daughter lies there helpless,
And these tender babes forlorn:"
Large tears unseen heavy trickled
Down his wrinkled features worn.

Silently the convict enter'd,
Sat down—watch'd the skies for rain;
While the aged grandsire sighing
Rock'd each hungry child again.

Rose the convict—to the thicket
Seeking fuel forth he went,
Then came back, and in the door-way
Gaz'd awhile and idly leant.

Ask'd he of the cruel landlord—
Each child's age, their father's name—
Then within he heap'd the faggot,
With his breath he fann'd the flame.

"'Tell me how much is it," spoke he,
"That you owe in all—you say,
If 'tis paid not ere the sunset
He will drive you forth to-day."

"Forty francs we owe him!"—"Surely
'Tis so small a sum, though stern,
If you take your children with you,
To soft pity he will turn."

"If we pay not ere the sunset,
Harsh-voiced bailiffs at the dawn
Of to-morrow's day will drive us
Far hence beggar'd and forlorn—

"See you, there, my daughter lying,
Thin and fever-dried—she went
Last night half a league to ask him,
By her children's sad eyes sent.

"But the lawyer spurn'd her sinking
On his step, with oath and curse,
And he smote her on the shoulder,
Though she bore yon child at nurse."

Then the convict mutter'd fiercely—
Flash'd his eyes as when he hurl'd
To the ground that haughty noble,
And his pale lip grimly curl'd.

One step forward, backward, made he—
'Twas a man that forward strode,
But an angel that turn'd backward—
Seem'd he lighten'd of his load.

Bright his smile—a tear-drop quivering,
Dimm'd no longer by despair,
Stole from 'neath his eye-lash lower'd
On that mute group lingering there.

All the rust that chains had gather'd
Ten long years within his breast,
By that tear was wash'd for ever,
And his soul was wrapp'd in rest.

Then unto those simple people
Spake he thus with accent clear—
"I am due to laws offended,
I have no right to be here.

"On my head a price there set is:
He may fifty francs receive,
Who shall take me to the city;
Haste, nor longer idly grieve.

"Take your prisoner, he is willing,
See, those children may not wait:
Come, be quick, no crime I counsel,
But a service to the State.

"Forty francs your landlord covets,
Fifty thus I gladly give
All I ask is Heaven's blessing,
That your little ones may live."

Long the old man gaz'd upon him,
In a corner sobbing fell;
But the choking words he utter'd
None might hear and none can tell.

"May destruction sooner gather
Round all here," at length he cried!
"Father!" shriek'd the fever'd woman,
"See, my youngest one hath died."

"Grand'ther," said the eldest sharply,
"Give my little brother bread;
François sleeps, I cannot wake him,
Here, with mother, in the bed."

"Grand'ther," whispering breath'd the second—
Favourite with the soft blue eyes—
"François, will he more be hungry?
God feeds François in the skies."

Spake the aged woman nothing,
But she bow'd toward the ground,
And it seem'd that thence there upward
Came a low and mutter'd sound.

"Come then!" "Never! I, a soldier,
Thus a comrade to betray,
I have stood beside the Emperor
After many a hard fought day.

"Go hence, seek a better shelter
Than this house of tears and death:
Take a blessing with thee, comrade,
Wafted by an old man's breath."

"Listen," said the convict coldly,
"Like a hunted wolf I roam:
Straight hence will I seek my prison,
As 'twere childhood's dearest home.

" I of liberty am sicken'd!
Better wear the convict's dress—
Better labour in a prison—
Than be free in this distress.

" If thou wilt not take this ransom,
Swear I, by Christ's holy name,
I will seek another captor,
And this money he shall claim.

" Hark! I hear the *gendarmes* trampling,
They will seek me far and wide;
I am weary.—Lo! I have not
Strength to flee, or soul to hide.

" Heaven hath sent me here to aid ye:
Dreamt I in my youth, or read,
How a raven sent by Heaven,
One whom man deserted fed."

Spake the aged woman, rising—
" Take, my son, this proffer'd aid;
He hath sinn'd and God is willing,
Let God's wisdom be obey'd."

Then a rope the convict twisted
From his prison dress he tore,
Round his waist he drew it tightly—
Stood erect upon the floor.

Kiss'd the dead child and the living,
Plac'd the rope with pious care
In the old man's trembling clutches,
Drew him forth with cheerful air.

Captive gently drew the captor—
Often held the old man back;
Not once did that weary convict
Pause upon his onward track.

Right unto the city came they
Without challenge to the gate—
"Captain of the guard, a prisoner
Here I render to the state!"

To the fortress' stern commandant
Come they with that armèd guard:
"Colonel, here I bring a prisoner
After struggling long and hard!"

Then the fifty francs they give him—
"Old man, tell me, hast thou serv'd?"
"Ask these scars upon my bosom
If at Lodi's bridge I swerv'd?"

"Thou art old, and grey, and weakly,
And the prisoner fierce and strong"—
"'Twas the spirit of a soldier
Nerv'd my arm to vanquish wrong."

"Here is gold, thou brave old soldier,
Tell the story of thy need:
I for thee will ask a pension;
'Tis well earn'd by such a deed."

"I must hasten to my children,
They are starving—without bread!"
"Stay with us, thou veteran soldier,
I will send and see them fed.

"To the guard-room take your comrade,
Old he is, but true and brave:
Convict! in two hours thy prison
Must be chang'd into a grave.

"Thou the penalty well knewest,
One hour take then to prepare—
One hour hence a file of soldiers
'Neath the tower's western stair!"

In the door-way stood the old man
Cowering, anxious to depart;
Seem'd it, as the cruel bullets
Of the soldiers reach'd his heart.

Back he stagger'd to the centre,
"Let me die!" he wildly rav'd:
But the convict frown'd in anger,
As one reckless to be sav'd.

Then he pour'd forth quickly—sadly—
All the truth, with anguish wrung:
"Take, oh! take your blood-stain'd money!—"
Round his prisoner's neck he clung.

Hoarsely cough'd the stern Commandant,
And the wind blew in his eyes;
Then with fierceness quite tremendous
Sought he pity to disguise.

"Guard, remove your prisoner! Old man,
Grieves me thou hast meanly lied;
Give the prisoner food and respite—"
Spake he to the guard aside.

In six days there came from Paris
For the convict pardon free;
And the stern Commandant gave him
Land, and Life, and Liberty!

Often do that aged couple
Tell the story o'er and o'er
To a sunburnt soldier sitting
By yon humble cottage door.

"Thus he did, yes, thus my prisoner
Did my trembling footsteps guide:"
"'Twas the day," low spake the mother,
"Our sweet little François died."

Often comes in pride the convict,
Noble pride, in truth, has he:
Merely to escape from prison
Makes no human being free.

'Tis the thought, the soul, the conscience!
Trust me, there are often found
Slaves in mind, among the proudest,
Worse than galley-slaves around.

Soon he finds a home still dearer
Than the one in youth he lost;
Oft shines manhood firmer, brighter,
For a spring by storm-clouds cross'd.

In a vine clad cottage chamber
Bright-hair'd children on his knees—
This, the Convict's simple story—
Gentle ladies, may it please.

THE FIR TREE*.

Drowsily, on barren height,
In the far-off arctic zone,
Through the dim and frozen night
Sleeps a Fir-tree all alone;
Round him wrapt there glitters bright
His snow coverlet of white.

* From the German of H. Heine.

Dreams he of a distant Palm
That in morning's orient land
'Neath the sky's eternal calm,
Like a thing forlorn doth stand,
On his burning wall of stone,
Grieving silent and alone.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE STARS*.

For thousand thousand years on high
The changeless stars above
Stand gazing, and each other eye
With sadden'd looks of love.

The language that they speak is rare,
Rich-blazon'd and soul-lit,
Yet no philologists declare
They can decipher it.

But I have learn'd this language true,
Nor shall forget its trace;
My grammar, love, thine eyes of blue,
And thy sweet wondering face.

* From Heine.

THE FISHERMAIDEN*.

Thou beautiful bright fishermaiden!
Come, steer me thy skiff to the land,
And sit by me, thine eyes newly laden
With love, fondly link'd hand in hand.

On this heart lay thy little head gaily,
Nor fear me too much: the wild sea
Bears thee carelessly floating far daily
From the warm earth thou lovest and me.

Sweet! my heart too thy sea doth resemble,
On its surface, tide, flood, storms, there be;
But in its depths sparkle and tremble
Many gems, many pearls fair to see.

THE LONELY TEAR†.

What will this lonely tear
That clouds my aching sight?
Alas! it doth remain with me
From times long fled in night.

* From Heine. † From Heine.

Its many shining sisters
Have flow'd away in gloom
Of wind and tempest raving
Round Joy's and Sorrow's tomb.

My sorrows and my joys! Like mists
Those little stars of blue,
That in this heart have smil'd them
So deeply, have fled too.

Ah me! my love itself
Hath vanish'd like mere breath:
Thou old and lonely tear
Flow forth now in thy death.

IN A LILY'S CHALIC'D BELL*.

In a lily's chalic'd bell
Soft I breath'd my fluttering soul,
Till my love's name from its cell
Back in perfum'd music stole.

Sung then by the flower trembling,
Long it quiver'd on my lip,
That sweet kiss of hers resembling
In a dream I once did sip.

* From Heine.

THE SLEEP OF BARBAROSSA*.

'King Frederick Barbarossa!
That Kaiser old and grim,
Deep in the vaulted castle
Enchantment holdeth him.

He died not as men perish,
A wizard life doth keep;
There, hidden in the castle,
He sits, enrob'd in sleep.

He has down with him taken
The splendour of his sway,
Some time he will return with it
On the appointed day.

The stool whereon he sitteth
In ivory shines fair,
Of marble is the table
O'er which he bendeth there.

His beard it is not flaxen,
But flame in spiral glow;
It pierces through the table
O'er which his head bows low.

* From the German of Rückert. By the black ravens is meant the priesthood.

In dreaming nods he often,
  Half opes his dim clos'd eye,
Awhile waits and then beckons
  A page that standeth by.

"Thou dwarf! rise up," he speaketh,
  "Before the castle go,
There look if the black ravens
  Still flutter to and fro:

"And if those ebon ravens
  Still flutter as of eld,
I must yet by enchantment
  A hundred years be held."

THE PILGRIMAGE TO KEVLAAR*.

I.

At window stands the mother,
  In bed there lay the son,
"Will you not rise, my Wilhelm,
  Ere yet the show be done?"

"I am so weary, mother,
  I cannot hear or see,
I think of my lost Gretchen,
  My heart aches wearily."

* From Heine.

"Rise up; we'll go to Kevlaar
With rosary and book,
God's mother, dear, shall cure thee,
On thy sick heart she'll look."

The holy standards flutter,
The holy tunes they sing,
To Cologne on the River
The sacred march they bring.

The mother follows closely,
His faltering step doth aid;
They both sing in the chorus
"Praise Marie! spotless maid."

II.

God's mother bright at Kevlaar
Her Sunday dress doth wear,
To-day she is so busy,
So many sick come there.

The sick people are bringing
As sacred offerings meet
Limbs moulded out of wax: there were
Both waxen hands and feet.

A hand of wax who bringeth her
His wounded hand grows whole;
And he who gives a waxen foot
Straight stands on a sound sole.

Of those who had sore fingers
On fiddles all now play,
On tight-ropes dance the crutch-borne
To Kevlaar came that day.

The mother took a wax-light
And form'd from it a heart,
" God's mother this accepting
Shall cure thy sorrow's smart."

The son the heart took sighing,
And sighing did beseech;
From his sad eyes the tear-drops,
From his sad heart the speech.

" Thou maiden pure of Heaven!
Thou highly prais'd, ador'd,
To thee, thou queen of glory!
My sufferings be deplor'd.

" I liv'd there with my mother,
At Cologne, in the town
That hath so many churches
And chapels up and down:

" And next to us liv'd Gretchen,
But she is now no more:
This waxen heart receiving,
Cure thou my heart so sore.

"Cure thou my sick heart's sorrow;
So fervently I'll pray
Both night and morning early
Marie! be prais'd alway."

III.

The sick son and the mother,
In a small room they slept,
There came God's mother gently;
Mid moonbeams pale she stept:

And o'er the sick man stooping
Her hand she softly laid,
Quite softly on his bosom,
Then smil'd, nor longer stay'd.

In dreams the mother saw this,
Nay more, in slumber bow'd;
Then woke she from her visions—
Why bark the dogs so loud?

There lay outstretch'd close to her
Her son, and he was dead;
Round his wan cheeks is playing
The morning bright and red.

The mother her hands folded,
She knew not what she felt;
But with low accents pious
In praise to Marie knelt.

NOW, FAREWELL!

In the hour when pleasure nigh thee
Gaily flits with circling cup,
Ere the ghost of sin hath found thee,
And thy soul hath waken'd up;
While the flatterer still approaches,
Crawling o'er thy beauty's fame,
Hear, oh! hear not my reproaches,
Hide, oh! hide thy lingering shame:
Now, Farewell!

When joy lights the flashing glances
Shot from 'neath thy brow of pride,
And thy dark eye revels, dances
To the whisper at thy side—
Lean back; let thy jewell'd finger
Point in scorn to this wrong'd heart,
While thy days of beauty linger,
Ere youth, health, and peace depart:
Now, Farewell!

Soon will cold deserted anguish
Fling its shade across thy brow,
And the proud thoughts fade and languish
'Neath thy swelling bosom now;

See, the dove no more returneth,
But the raven haunts thy breast,
And thy soul within thee burneth;
Vain, oh! vain thy prayer for rest:
Now, Farewell!

When life's false illusions fly thee,
And thy cradle meets thy grave,
At that hour I will be nigh thee,
In one curse around thee rave;
See thy bleeding bosom riven,
Ask if God's great lightnings live!
No! I'd stoop down e'en from Heaven,
THEN to raise thee and forgive:
Now, Farewell!

Thou more vows hast idly broken
Than the soul of Sappho sung;
All that lovers e'er have spoken
Fell in passion from thy tongue:
'Twas thy wild caresses won me
Captive to thy froward will,
And those eyes that coldly shun me
Drank in mine of love their fill:
Now, Farewell!

With thy love-encircling tresses—
Eyes that once played Helen's part,
Didst thou in its deep recesses
Bid the traitor reach my heart;

To my couch and chamber guiding
All the fell assassin band—
" Here he sleeps, here, all confiding—
Strike where points my ruthless hand!"
Now, Farewell!

God is just and Time quick passes,
E'en now while I faintly sing,
In the Future's magic glasses
Shapes of night their shadows fling:
Sternly Retribution hurries
Veil'd in gloom the fateful day;
Vainly crime Repentance buries—
I for thee will kneel and pray.
NOW, FAREWELL!

L'AMOUR QUI PASSE ET L'ESPOIR QUI VIENT.

I.

I lov'd her, I wooed her, I won her at last,
And each soft spell of fondness around me she cast,

As together we stood 'neath the stars, and she swore
That like us none had lov'd in the wide world before;

Whilst I drank her wild whispers deep down in my soul
With their music the dashing waves sparkle and roll:

And she bade me look far in the bright sapphire west
For a home in the clouds where our hearts might find rest;

For she said she might lose me in this world of pain,
And her breath came in sobs as she question'd again—

If my heart were as true, as her heart that was mine,
Might the golden chords snap that our bosoms entwine?

Would I ever be colder—another love weave,
And, forgetting my vows, bid her fainting soul grieve?

And she swore that she liv'd in my smile, look, or nod,
And with blasphemy called me her angel and God:

How little I thought her soft blasphemy flew,
Wing'd with falsehood, on high, thro' the skies' deepening blue!

II.

And she lay in my arms—then a dark whisper stole,
Like the hiss of a snake, o'er my shuddering soul:

And it said, first in dreams, then in waking, "Arise!
She is heartless, and loves thee not—look in her eyes"—

And I look'd in her eyes, and I felt of a truth
That an old age had crept o'er our love in its youth,

And her step wax'd more haught, and her eye grew more cold,
And she pledg'd not my soul with her glance as of old:

But when others came round her and prais'd her, she wore
A proud air I never saw in her before.

Whilst I watch'd her in silence my heart I might hear,
As it throbb'd in my breast, when her step came not near,

When her step came not near me, as seated aloof
I sat down rob'd in grief 'neath the dusk of my roof:

And she sang not for me; whilst each melody seem'd
Like an echo of Joy I had once fondly dream'd:

And her light step, that tripp'd like a fawn in my hall,
Grew heavy and bounded no more to my call.

III.

Then I sudden gave birth to a sharp piercing cry,
And I thought if another she lov'd, I would die—

Could I hope for oblivion, see not her bliss,
Nor my spirit be torn by the sound of a kiss—

But a chill from the threshold of Death met my heart,
And the midnight beyond made my soul backward start;

For I fancied my punishment might be to cling
To the world I abhorred, like a visionless thing—

As the spectre of crime hovers still round the spot
Where the dull clay that held it doth fester and rot,

In the shadow that seems 'neath yon black Yew alive,
Where the rank waving grass will not spring up and thrive:

In the moonlight that quickens o'er vault and green mound,
When the flight of a bat is a loud painful sound;

And the tombstones seem changing around, as the snow
From the white phantom iceberg slips noiseless below,

When the frozen seas tinkle and lazily creep,
And the pale soul of Death seems to stir from its sleep—

Thus I thought that my spirit by passion betray'd
Like a miser's might haunt where my treasure was laid:

When the shadows of twilight should mix with her hair,
If a lover knelt to her, that I might be there;

With the chill morn unfasten the windows of gloom,
And on sunbeams transfix'd be alive in her room—

So I turn'd on my griefs, as a lion at bay
Rends the wild dogs would make him when wounded their prey.

IV.

It is night! O'er my dwelling there shines down a star,
Like a ray on a tomb, from a bright world afar:

'Tis the same that her tears once impearl'd in the sky,
As she whisper'd her faint soul deserted would die.

It is o'er! She is gone with a treacherous wile,
And the false world comes round her to proffer its smile:

There's the rapture of praise from a cold lying lip,
And the flatterer, wasp-like, on perfume doth sip:

'Twas the breath of my soul—now 'tis shed all around,
As the ape tears and scatters a rose on the ground:

And society's hags, with thin smiles o'er a sneer,
Like the paint on a death's head draw jauntily near;

And the fool and the tempter, with stale selfish lies,
Spread the circle around her where innocence dies:

'Tis the charm'd ring of Fashion, whose demon is Pride,
And the leering sin steps forth and claims her as bride;

As she pledges her soul, lo! one sorrowful face,
'Mid the throng briefly seen, in her breast leaves no trace.

V.

Round my mansion I wander ere day hath begun,
'Till its casements, like blind eyes, look blank in the sun.

Like a stranger at evening I come to my gate,
And within sit down hopelessly staring at fate.

All the chattels are round me she threaded among,
And the moments are told by the same warning tongue,

That my ears met before from the time-piece of gold,
Ere the fatal stroke death to my happiness told:

It was here that I brought her. My heart then I set
To beat time with her own, as our warm bosoms met—

For a life, for an age, that should glide softly by,
Like a river sun-lit 'neath a bright summer sky:

In her eyes seeking deeply and oft to unweave
All the bright mystic depths where thoughts sparkle or grieve.

From a neighbouring home the same music is heard,
And my thoughts to fresh anguish hath wantonly stirr'd:

O'er yon mirror her beauty hath glanc'd o'er and o'er,
Like that mirror my eye-sight is gladden'd no more:

Would her image as lightly had fled from my soul;
Might the dark stream of Time ne'er again backward roll,

To the sad voice of Memory stretch'd on its brink,
Crown'd with pale willow leaves that the cold waters drink.

Would her vine-trellis'd hair had ne'er perfum'd my face,
Would this breast had not miser'd each soft speaking grace—

Would I'd liv'd unwaken'd to bliss that is dead
Would the moments white-winged had ne'er come that are fled.

It is Evening and Autumn. The winds whistle round,
And the pale ghosts of Summer flit fast to the ground;

Down the pathway they rustle, then volleying fall
On the dark window, shaken from Night's dripping pall.

Like a robber I creep to the side of my bed,
To steal peace from repose—but find Sleep lying dead;

And lie down by the Sleep that is murder'd, in vain
To compose in its semblance my brow knit with pain.

Lo! the billows of passion tumultuous roll,
And in scorn lift and dash down the wreck of my soul!

VI.

It is past, like a dream that may ne'er come again;
I have wept for my folly and smil'd back on pain.

Grief hath since followed grief, sorrow kib'd sorrow's heel,
Till the sear'd heart exhausted refuses to feel:

But from Joy laid in dust springs the thirst for a name,
And the coffin of Love is the cradle of Fame.

For the boy-love must die on the altar of man,
Ere his thoughts may in freedom the universe span;

Ere the stately ship hold on her course in the sun,
Ere the strong bow be bent and the swift race be run.

Tear the soft silken curtain away from the soul
That would wrestle with Evil or reach Wisdom's goal;

But let it in rent of the storm-cloud appear,
And with sorrow be temper'd its bright Angel spear:

For the world hath no pleasure not wedded to death,
And our warmest hopes pass like a frail summer breath.

'Tis the struggle that makes us. The hope that is dead
Leaves the ash whence a Phœnix doth burst forth instead.

O'er a tomb in this world must Ambition recline,
Ere it glance back to Heaven with glories divine,

As a white marble monument shines through the night,
When the pure star of Faith on its forehead sheds light.

'Tis the shipwreck'd soul winneth the isle of content,
Where it drifts on the lone spar by Misery lent;

And the spirit that suffers most pangs in its youth
Hath but pluck'd a few thorns from the pathway of Truth.

THE PARTING.

Thou, whom I lov'd so dotingly,
And trusted with confiding heart;
Take now this mournful verse from me,
For ever, that we part—we part.

The future of my life shall be
A shadow of the smiling past;
Too happy days soon doom'd to flee,
And leave me, like the sea, o'ercast;

When the cold damp of evening wakes
The slumberer on the fragile deck,
Ere yet God's lion tempest shakes
And rends, in scorn, the reeling wreck.

Take back, I tell thee, take back *all*—
The sunny glance when first we met,
Our hopes, and follies, pangs—then call
Some angel power to bid—forget.

The various common cares of life,
Our daily counsel, thoughts, and fears,
Each look of grief, love, playful strife—
I see them through these falling tears,

More clear than as they pass'd, when we
Stood clasp'd awhile in sheltering cave
Upon the brink of that dark sea,
Time's bitter birth and endless grave.

And now we stand on either shore,
Apart—apart! I stretch in vain
My arms—I see thee not. 'Tis o'er!
We may not—cannot meet again!

In death, I'd left thee ne'er—had kept
A vigil o'er thee still unseen;
But when thy quivering eyelids slept,
Then present to thy soul had been.

Now—now eternal shadows keep
Between our paths their midnight gloom:
Be dreams my life, my life the sleep
Of one reposing on a tomb!

This shroud of memory round me worn,
I'll, rending, laugh to scorn the smart;
The robe of Nessus thus were torn,
But never heals the bleeding heart.

This is but life. *We* are soul-riven,
Nor thus may meet in realms above;
Such heavenly boon alone is given,
When souls are twins in bonds of love.

THE MEETING.

I passed thee. Thou'rt no longer mine;
Deep on my pallid cheek
The flush of angry shame hath left
Its sad autumnal streak.

I saw thee. And e'en now my soul
Thy living portrait sears;
I gaze on it, when nought beside
Steals through these blinding tears.

Pale flocks of leaves are falling fast,
Like spirits of the slain;
But faster thoughts of anguish fall
Heap'd o'er my bosom's pain:

They tell me of the cherish'd wreath,
Thy white and polish'd brow
In dark and green luxuriance wore—
Ah me! 'tis faded now:

Not like th' "immortal" wreaths bestow'd
By pious hands on death;
They bloom, but this has wither'd been
In my warm living breath.

I sought its drooping leaves to aid,
I would not see them die;
They seem'd so like the hours of bliss
We snatch'd at, fleeting by.

The dew from Grief's night-flowers was there,
With which wan cheeks are wet;
The sights that o'er faint shuddering Hope
Are breath'd by stern Regret.

Methinks, if thus my pains were lost,
I need not wondering be;
That wreath might only hope to live
If worn again by thee!

And could thy warm shape pass me by?
And could'st thou all forget?
And have we, torn each fondest pledge,
Like strangers coldly met?

And am I farther from thee now
Than all the world beside?
And must I lay my heart from thee?
Would I had rather died!

In sleep I sometimes stretch my arms,
And still my treasure find;
Ah! tell me why are dreams, my love,
Than waking less unkind?

Is not this all a dream of woe?
Quick thy soft hand unveil!
Quick touch me, lest in sleep I die—
My quivering pulses fail.

Lest I should die in sleep, my love,
And on thee gaze no more—
One wailing cry, and I am gone
Unto the silent shore;

Unto the silent shore, where Hope
Prints not her footsteps vain;
I might not hear thy thrilling cry—
"Come back, my love, again!"

I might not see thy dazzling arms
Stretch'd wildly forth for me;
Dim roll between the boatless waves
Of dark Eternity!

CYPRESS LEAVES AND PASSION FLOWERS.

I.

AH! LEAVE ME NOT.

I cannot, may not, love but thee,
Then smile on this sad heart:
Say not those piercing words to me,
"We must for ever part!"
Fling back thy veil of shadowy hair,
Give me a look to stay despair!

By all that thrills my memory
In dreaming o'er the past,
Each passion-flower of ecstasy
That shed its leaves so fast;
By wan Hope's last bright, hectic spot,
Each wild embrace—ah! leave me not!

II.

LOVE DIED WITHIN MY STRICKEN SOUL.

Love died within my stricken soul—
An old man led me from the tomb:
Then, pointing to the stars that roll
Eternal, glittering through the gloom,
He ranged their mystic alphabet
To bid my earth-fed soul forget,
And told me that the end was there
Of pain and sorrow, grief and care.

His name was WISDOM!—as I caught
The honied accents from his tongue,
How nobly was the lesson taught;
My heart already seem'd less wrung—
A fleeting Memory came by,
Tossing her thin hands with faint cry;
The blinding tears rush'd o'er my sight:
He fled—I wept, alone, in night.

III.

FROM YON CURTAIN'D CLOUD.

From yon curtain'd cloud, her slumber leaving,
Steals the moon in witchery of light,
Bright the waves in soft luxuriance heaving
Meet the deep sighs of the dark-tress'd night

But the magic scene to me is shaded,
And its power to shed sweet influence nought;
'Tis the spirit's dim eclipse when faded,
Sadly veil'd by lone and sorrowing thought.

Earth with fond remembrance gently quitting,
In an hour like this I would depart,
Propp'd by pillows, near the casement sitting,
Hear the beat of every loving heart;
See the moon-beam kiss the silent ocean,
Press the hand that vainly bid me stay,
Then let sleep with bitter, sweet emotion,
Through the twilight steal my soul away!

IV.

THE EARTH IS FAIR FOR SOME THAT SMILE.

The earth is fair for some that smile,
But dark for those that weep,
And I have liv'd a little while,
That now would only sleep:
My childhood asks me of the hour,
And why I wake in pain—
Ah! would my spirit had the power
To be a child again.

Alas! the heart that is beguil'd
By joy that fades so soon,
Feels but the sorrow of the child,
When clouds enrobe the moon;

For every cradle 'neath her rays,
She silvers o'er a tomb;
The lamp of Wisdom only stays
To light us in the gloom.

V.

METHOUGHT IN SLUMBER THOU DIDST O'ER ME STOOP.

Methought in slumber thou did'st o'er me stoop,
With eyes like twin soft stars of liquid light,
Till on my forehead fell from pearly loop
Thy tresses perfum'd as the Eastern night.

Thy lips to mine like humid rose-leaves clung,
In the low murmur of a tender kiss:
Awhile, in turn, I raptur'd o'er thee hung,
Then sank down fainting in the lap of bliss.

VI.

TO LIVE THUS ONCE WERE ALWAYS LIFE.

I'd not be born, apart from thee,
A monarch's eldest son,
Or victor be of battle-fields,
So thou too wert not won:

Nor fashion's mask, nor wealth's disguise,
Can save from chilling death;
Let me be mirror'd in thine eyes
And perfum'd by thy breath.

To live thus once were always life,
While bright things still remain;
And Love, sweet truant from the skies,
In young hearts bloom'd again:
By twilight grove, or cadenc'd rill,
Where lovers first were met,
Our vows would breathe enchantment still,
And bid them ne'er forget.

I would not live away from thee
For all the wealth of Inde;
I'd rather in a desert live,
And thy sweet presence find,
Hear thy voice murmur in the breeze,
Salute thee in the stream,
See golden sunlight kiss the trees,
Then o'er thy tresses beam.

VII.

AH! LITTLE DREAMT I ON THE DAY.

Ah! little dreamt I on the day
I drew thee to soft Paphian bowers,

How soon Time's stream would bear away
Love's scatter'd torch and wither'd flowers,
And leave me, ere my locks grew white,
To weep for morn, yet sigh for night.

There is a scar beneath my hair,
There is a sorrow at my heart;
The one in old age I shall bear,
The other may not from me part—
But I, in pride, will clasp my fate,
Meet scorn with scorn, and hate with hate!

VIII.

THE LIPS WHICH SPAKE THOSE SILVERY SOUNDS.

The lips which spake those silvery sounds
I ne'er again may see;
But, oft, like dreams of childish love,
They'll haunt my memory:
Looks, too, there were as one had stray'd
Bright crystal gates within,
Where spirits dwell and met their eyes
Without reproof or sin.

And she I lov'd was 'mid them all,
But comes, in light, no more;
Save, when I dream by Time's dark stream,
Her white robe skirts the shore:

I wake and fling my aching arms
In sudden grief on high,
To me, O World! thou might'st have been
A Heaven beneath the sky.

IX.

BLEED IN THE DARK, MY SOUL!

Bleed in the dark, my soul, nor let
The world deride thy woes;
If thou canst not thyself forget,
Let gloom around thee close:
Nor yield the sacred wounds of grief
To careless doubt, or cold belief.

Mournful the fate of him, whom song
May cheer, alas! no more,
Though swan-like he but sail along
To dark oblivion's shore—
Sound then, my harp! the Indian Brave
In death sings for himself, the stave.

X.

RETURN, MY LOVE, RETURN!

I lay me down at break of day,
Yet rise at early morn,
To feel that something from my heart—
My aching heart—is torn:

In dreams, awake, I hear a voice,
Whose thrilling accents burn,
And echo in my soul, it cries—
"Return, my love, return!"

I'll wrap thee from the world's rude storms;
I am thy lover—friend;
Oh! bid this dream—this hideous dream—
Oh! bid it quickly end:
They love thee not, that circle thee
From me, they may not learn
This heart, whose world is only thine;
"Return! my love, return!"

XI.

WHAT TAUGHT MY ANGUISH'D SOUL TO LOVE.

What taught my anguish'd soul to love
A thing so frail as thee?
No form of light from realms above
Could thy false image be:
Yet graven here by ruthless dart,
The fiery letters burn,
Thou hold'st the ashes of my heart
Inclos'd in Memory's urn:
Ah! scatter them, and give me rest—
Unchain the vulture from my breast.

Oh! might the spectre of the past
Fade 'neath the earth away,

With each bright hope that fled so fast,
Remembrance too decay;
But Time, whose shadow o'er earth's flowers
Doth reach ere well they bloom,
Still leaves the ghosts of happier hours
To glide round Memory's tomb:
He will not all consume, ere death
Breathes on the heart with icy breath.

XII.

THE STORM OF PASSION SWEEPS MY BREAST.

The storm of passion sweeps my breast,
Yet may not still the heart's deep grief;
The dark volcano sinks to rest,
Whose inward pang finds no relief:

Again its bosom flings on high
The fiery ashes that return;
The glowing lava tints the sky,
The last green shreds of verdure burn.

PALE MEMORY IS MINE.

Pale Memory is mine: I married her,
When Hope lay weltering like a drownëd child,
Whom the rude surges reach to lift and stir,
[illegible]led in sea weed, 'neath the storm dirge
[illegible]ld.

Into each other's eyes we constant look,
And whisper smiling, of the world around
Unconscious. Like a deep and willowy brook,
Time rushes past, and lulls us with his sound.

I love wan Memory. She is my choice;
Fortune hath nought to leave her, but she brings
A dow'r of fairest pearls, and gentle voice
Whose music soft enchantment round me flings.

She is my sad Ophelia, and doth glide
Away from me full oft upon Time's stream,
Against the current borne on magic tide,
Singing faint snatches of an orphan dream;

But aye returns with treasures in her lap,
A tress of hair, a perfume, wither'd leaf,
And lays her cheek to mine. This is our hap,
We have two quiet children, Joy and Grief.

NAY, TELL ME NOT THE SKY IS BLUE.

Nay, tell me not the sky is blue;
Let others court the sun's warm rays,

My heart to sorrow only true,
Loves best the gloom of clouded days:
When the sky weeps I grieve the less,
Sunshine may gild, but cannot bless.

Bright days are lost to one like me;
The shade but deepens o'er my heart:
Each joyous bird, each budding tree
Unkindly mocks my leafless part;
And Summer flowers reproaches fling
At one whose Winter came in Spring.

Yet if illusion briefly deck
With child-like gifts my sadden'd breast,
So round some lone and stranded wreck,
Bright moon-lit rays may wanton best;
The sunniest sward where children play
Is oft 'mid ruins' cold decay.

When dim grey morning bids retreat
Those trooping fayes from mortal ken,
And vainly tracks their silvery feet,
That wreck seems drearier, lonelier then;
Is not the ruin doubly sad,
Which chance a moment hath made glad?

WOULD I MIGHT FALL ASLEEP AGAIN AND DREAM.

Would I might fall asleep again and dream!
For Joy to me hath been so brief a thing,
To index Sorrow it doth only seem,
Or give advancing Time a fleeter wing—
Would I might fall asleep again and dream!

Touchstone of Grief—the measure frail of Woe,
Its birth and funeral on the self-same day;
A child that may to manhood never grow,
A false gem stolen from a god of clay,
Joy blesses none with pure or lasting ray;

Except in dreams, and I would dream again,
That Hope perchance might wake me up from sleep:
I care not if Hope lie, since Truth is pain,
And only bids us Falsehood know, and weep
Our little brackish flood of human rain.

Alas! that it is so. Alas! that dreams,
Sans motive, end, beginning, truthfulness,
Should so exceed in ecstasy the gleams
We have of mid-day gladness, that 'tis less
To be the lord of life, than slave of dre

FOR EVERMORE.

I dreamt I by a river stood,
And saw an Angel bright and good;
And would have dwelt for evermore
In the sweet lustre of her eyes;
But, oh, as on that magic shore
I sought to clasp her for my prize,
The broad and rapid current bore
Her far away, for evermore,
Ah, me, for evermore!

Still, still her form seems always near,
Though nought is left but memory dear
Of her who might for evermore
Have turn'd to music all my sighs,
Amid life's sullen wintry roar—
Alas! my heart within me dies—
Fate shuts me out with iron door
From her, I'll love for evermore,
Ah, me, for evermore!

MORE EARTHLY THAN THE EARTH SHE IS.

More earthly than the earth she is,
And yet so passing fair;

Around her head of classic grace
Dark streams her billowy hair.

Her eyes flash Sybil's fire—her hand
Is jewell'd with less flame:
Her nostril fine dilates—'tis as
A steed's ye may not tame.

And oftentimes there dwells a grace
Of pensive memory there,
Within those eyes of thrilling light,
Beneath yon cloud of hair.

So calm she looks and noble, as
A statue in a stream,
Reflected by the cold moon's light,
Might grandly chasten'd seem.

But 'neath the glories of that brow
A world of meanness lies,
And 'neath that bosom's drapery
A shrivell'd heart there plies.

And in those eyes a glitter lurks
Of Satan's guile and pride;
A serpent 'mid the coronal
Of flowers, she may not hide.

She sings: her voice delicious woe
Doth breathe around the heart:
She grows an angel on my sight,
Ah, me! I wake and start!

I think of dreadful tales of old,
Of Circe, and the ring,
On which the statue's finger clos'd,
Whereof old ballads sing—

The loathely ladye that by side
Of bridegroom lay all night,
Until the air doth choke me, and
I fling myself upright!

And stretch my arms and breathe, as if
I would my being try,
That life is not a hideous dream,
And all around a lie.

MINE BE A POET'S GRAVE.

Mine be a poet's grave,
Close by the rippling wave,
Or where the winds their mighty surges roll,
Where pale Anemone
Full of frail melody
Shall breathe soft whispers o'er my slumbering soul.

Let only children stray
Seeking bright shells in play,
Where I am laid—whom wild birds scarcely fly,
Or some lost lover roam
Like me, without a home,
'neath the flowers of earth, or in the sky.

FIGHT ON, BRAVE HEART, FIGHT ON.

Fight onwards to the breach, brave heart!
Where victory o'er Life is won;
To mourn is but the coward's part,
Thou hast the warrior's now begun:
Pour out thy last, best, ruddiest drop,
But 'till thy wild pulsation stop,
Fight on, brave heart, fight on!

The knight of old sought Christ's dear grave,
When joy from earthly home had gone;
For this he dared the wintry wave,
And roam'd o'er burning waste alone:
Make thou a wiser pilgrimage
To thine own grave, in youth or age,
Fight on, brave heart, fight on!

A HYMN OF NATURE,

ADDRESSED TO PAPIST, PROTESTANT, AND DISSENTER.

I climb'd a mountain, as it were
The first step of a giant stair
That leads to God above;

And on its topmost sun-bath'd rock
Drank in the sweet electric shock
Of universal love.

In one bright moment then did seem
The far-off city like a dream,
Where late I sorrowing dwelt;
Its host of crimes and follies bare,
Like spectral squadrons through the air
Of evening mists, fast melt.

Pellucid lakes around me lay
Sleeping in sunlight's golden ray,
Like beauty's glasses spread;
Where nature tricks her tresses fair
Or sleeks her dewy twilight hair,
Ere stol'n cloud-rob'd to bed.

All garmented in light I stood
And saw the hawk pois'd o'er the wood
Beneath me hovering fly;
My shadow stretch'd far down the steep—
"Let those who live in cities weep,
And sin, and mourn, and die."

My soul felt purg'd, my spirit free,
I cried aloud in ecstasy,
Then knelt—'twas not in vain—
Where breath'd the blue-bell's soft perfume;
Soon o'er my spirit stole the bloom
Of infancy again.

To One unseen my prayer I rais'd,
And thought not *how* He should be prais'd—
My church the world around—
Alas! those prayers that only feed
The bigot's soul with envious creed
Fall poison'd to the ground.

Let him in dull polluted cell,
And him that mocks with book and bell
A worship pure and true—
Without one thought of God above,
Without one spark of Heavenly love—
Go scent the hare-bells blue:

The birds his choir, the sun his light,
The stars his candles lit by night,
Not flickering vain through day:
The dark religion of his soul
Like vapours chill shall backward roll,
Truth crown him with her ray.

Ah! think they of a God at all,
In church, cathedral, chapel small,
That quarrel o'er a name—
Things undefin'd, or only guess'd,
Mere forms of acting things unbless'd—
But Heaven's great Word defame?—

Round yon grey stones what rascals caw?
Each turret-haunting chattering daw
Doth mock the priestly race;

But senseless breeds no real spite,
Kind nature bids him wing his flight—
He shows no double face.

He does not call it Jesus' will,
His cup with venom'd hate to fill,
And scowl, and curse, and strike;
If others deem some other way,
Than his may lead to realms of day
And save the soul alike.

He asks no paltry turnpike toll
On life's dread bridge, at sin's dark goal,
Nor swears no bridge beside
May span the fiery waves below,
No cockle-shell but his may row
O'er the eternal tide.

He does not use God's dreaded name
As password to earth's fleeting fame,
Whose substance lives in hell;
He does not steal, lie, murder, cheat,
To sit down mid the Saints' élite
And mock salvation sell.

He does not breathe with serpent breath
On one repentant ere his death,
To grasp the orphan's dower;
Nor when the dream of life grows dim,
To Californian Idol grim
Turn Heaven's benignant power.

He preaches in no partial strain,
Causing the Angels' bosoms pain
To hear their God belied;
In short he is not Wisdom's fool,
Ambition's daring, frenzied tool,
Dark Hate his black-rob'd bride.

Come, leave your worldly spoils to pray
For light within your human clay,
Ere fellow souls you save;
Beneath the sky's celestial cope,
Step naked forth each Priest and Pope
And cunning surplic'd knave.

Ask mercy on your greater sin,
Ere you for others' faults begin
To bend in hideous pride:
Then, flung aside your worldly power,
Your gifts be like the meek blue flower
That decks the mountain side.

As simple sad as village graves,
Is the true ministry that saves
Beneath approving Heaven;
As curst as Scythian's lustful tomb
That yawns with sacrificial gloom,
The Pharisaic leaven.

To every church, sect, schism, belief,
Truth's earliest loss, or latest grief,
That charity belies,

A lesson on the mountain side
Were worth a life's cathedral pride,
Where true religion dies.

Yet not to saint's ascetic groan,
Geneva's sneer or canting moan,
Be preference idly given;
The humble hypocrite is worse
Than purpled despot's mitred curse,
And farther still from Heaven.

A MOTHER'S EYES.

A mother's eyes are magnets of the child
To draw him up to boyhood; then like stars
They are put out by meteoric youth
Dimming the pure calm of their holy ray:
A mother's eyes the grown-up man forgets
As they had never been—with knitted brow
The godless pilot of Ambition's sea,
Steering his bark to islands all unknown,
He never reaches. Lo! in dismal wreck
Those isles are cover'd with the ghosts of ships,
That only drift there through Oblivion's night,
Touching the shore in silence.

In old age
Remembrance from her portrait lifts the veil,
And then a mother's eyes look forth again,
And through the soul's dark windows gaze, like doves
New lighted from the sky, and fill it thus
With thoughts of innocence and dreams of love;
Until our coffin like our cradle grows,
Then sleep we child-like, hush'd in sweet repose.

THE ETERNITY OF SOUND.

Nothing altogether dieth,
Though its shape may change on earth,
From the cloud that shadowy flieth
To the insect's fluttering birth;
Still 'tis matter, ever breeding
Some fresh form at Nature's will,
And the human tide receding
Beats upon a new shore still.

Nought from space can ever perish,
Though the brightest things decay,
And the hearts we most do cherish
Change the soonest into clay:
Life and Death are ever playing
Link'd in mystic union wild;
Death, the skeleton, goes Maying—
To a grave steals Life, the child.

'Mid strange thoughts that silent quiver
Falling on my soul by night,
Like the snow on some broad river
Dim-lit by its own pale light,
Sea-ward flowing to the ocean,
Whose bright waves its limit bound,
O'er my spirit's sad emotion
Came a vision strange of sound.

Canst thou bind the evening glory
Of the sky's cloud-woven dreams,
Heap bright story over story
Knit with sunset's parting beams?
Canst thou count the drops from fountains,
Ripples of the moon-lit sea,
Leaves of forests, crags of mountains,
Heaven's bright stars?—then follow me!

No more round the sun revolving
But in frenzy spun and torn
'Mid the wreck of worlds dissolving,
Was my subtle spirit borne:
Whilst I thought all creatures waited
For the speech of One above;
Each soul hoping, trembling—fated
For a life of wrath or love.

Flew I o'er their sickening faces,
Upturn'd to those portals bright;

Countless seed of myriad races
Gazing, blinded by the light:
As I pass'd, a Voice cried near me,
That my soul's foundation stirr'd
" Gather, Angels good, that fear me,
Every erring human word."

Through the world's brief ages buried,
Backward stream'd each breathëd sound,
To the verge of chaos hurried
From its black abyss profound;
Thus upon the time-less morrow
Of a fiery eve of doom,
Each false earth-spoke word of sorrow,
Murmuring, broke its icy tomb.

Came the whisper and the slander,
And the lover's plighted vow,
Treacherous wile, and faithless candour
Spoken with fair-seeming brow—
Came the oath, retraction, folly,
Light—forgotten as the breeze,
That with dying melancholy
Swung life's cradle 'mid the trees.

Came each lie that quiver'd trembling
On the crack'd and perjur'd lip,
Or remorseless sat dissembling,
Wasp-like beauty's dews to sip;

Each warm troth by red mouth plighted,
Each reply that love undid,
Each cold word a heart that blighted,
Or the soul's emotion hid.

Came the patriot's mock oration,
Oaths of perjur'd tyrants faint,
Dastard vile equivocation,
Sneer and shuffle of the saint:
Came the words of priests beguiling,
God's false messengers on earth;
Worse than blasphemy reviling,
Worse than unbeliever's mirth.

Like the world's leaves autumn-buried,
Age on age from perish'd trees,
Onward, onward, swept they, hurried,
Urg'd on by no living breeze:
Crowding, trooping, flocking, shivering,
Phantoms of each grain that ran
Through Time's hour-glass shaken, quivering,
Since in sin the Earth began—

Time's frail glass, whose sands are measured
From Eternity's dull shore,
Life's gay, glittering birthright, treasured
Till those faint sands run no more;
Till their glittering heap be level,
And the trace is swept away;
As when sprites fantastic revel
Far o'er desert plains away,

And the *mirage* idly ceases,
Ere the burning sun goes down,
Air-drawn towers fall in pieces,
Column, temple, grove, and town;
Waterfalls' light misty graces
Smoke-like wreath'd o'er forests green—
All dissolve, and leave no traces;
No more e'en by Hope are seen—

As those voices, long forgotten,
Pass'd me in that strange review,
Each sad soul in sin begotten
Its own frenzied utterance knew:
Each a burning accusation
Felt in every uttered sound,
As 'twere some dark blood-libation
Rising upward from the ground.

Like grim Shades, with pointed finger,
Rising awful from the earth,
Some awhile did seem to linger,
Some to vanish in their birth:
Words of hatred, haste, or anger,
Fled e'er scarcely they were heard;
Died away in sullen languor
Sounds by idle Folly stirr'd.

While Remembrance stood by sadly,
Waving with her mystic wand,

Each pale trembling soul had gladly
Seal'd with Death a lasting bond,
To escape that bitter anguish,
Vain remorse and fierce regret;
Better this than endless anguish,
Could, oh! could they but forget!

Not one blasphemy e'er utter'd
But comes, wing'd with terror, back;
Not one base wish darkly mutter'd
Finds not to some heart its track:
Oh! 'tis strange to mark how alters
Earth's dull vain opinion there;
In the world, Truth oftenest falters,
Now Hypocrisy stands bare.

* * * * *

In no written page recorded,
All in human life e'er said,
False or cruel, base or sordid,
Thus accusing meets the Dead:
Each word witness, each a token,
Call'd forth by that Power Divine—
'Mid oath, vow, and promise broken,
False one, then—*then*, think of THINE!

THE RHYME OF THE SPENDTHRIFT.

It was a young man faded
Sat shuddering with affright,
And wearily upbraided
A Wanton fled in night,
O'er Fate's drear door-sill vanish'd;
He toy'd with her too long,
And now for ever banish'd
He mourn'd the bitter wrong.
Sing—Oh! upon the World's door-step, I linger here in shame:
I had, I gave—I lent to save. Chalk up the losing game.

He thought of friends who pledg'd him,
In his own ruby wine,
And the sparkling faces hedg'd him
Wherever he might dine,
Till crimson fancies plashing
Rush'd o'er his reeling sight,
Like a soldier's red cloak flashing
In blood-mist through the night
Sing—Oh! upon the World's door-step, I grovel here in shame:
I had, I gave—I lent to save. Score up the cruel game.

Next he pictur'd women's wiles, who
Had smil'd upon his folly;
Poor fool! he wins no smiles now
From his leman, Melancholy:
But his Vanity stripp'd naked
Flies shrieking into air,
And in her place stands ragged
The mocking phantom, Care.
Sing—Oh! the gate is fasten'd now upon the son of shame:
I had, I gave—I lent to save. Curse on the mocking game.

And Care's gaunt sister, Sorrow,
Like a pauper famine-mad
Sat bidding him foul morrow
In biting accents sad:
Her thin lips trembling blue
Touch'd dry her misty veil,
And her cry was "Wirrasthrue!
What doth my darling ail?"
Sing—I am here, the world goes on, nor recks it of my shame:
I had, I gave—I lent to save. Soon finish'd is the game.

His dog crept to him whining,
He spurn'd him first away;
Fiercely selfish is repining
Within this human clay;

But the beast still crawling closer
Sat crouching 'neath his nod;
He saw no thread-bare loser,
Nor question'd he his God.
Sing—Oh! upon the beggar steps down from the bridge of life,
The dog is there, sweet folly rare. Score up; the game is rife.

He call'd him to him—marry!
How he frolick'd, bark'd—then stood
For an order to go carry
Or a stone, or piece of wood:
There be stone hearts I know many
And heads of wood enow
Might be purchas'd for a penny,
And little harm I trow.
Sing—Dog's meat, ho! ye human hearts that human hearts betray:
The game's alive—make haste and thrive. Time's offal-cart doth stay.

Then countless masques around him
Seem'd glowering through the air,
Dull stupor feebly bound him,
He felt them gazing there—
Till he recogniz'd the faces
Of society's cold stare

Smooth world-flunkeys in their places
He had known when life was fair.
Sing—Hang your carpet from the window—at the mast-head clap a broom:
Thin-lipp'd Pride is Folly's bride—Poverty take elbow-room.

Thus when Fortune jilting fools us
All fly from us in our need:
While sad knowledge sternly schools us,
Fortune's smiles we may not read:
But her wrinkles iron-wreathèd
Sear with pain the aching heart;
Tears for water, sighs deep breathèd
Ease alone the burning smart.
Sing—Had we known the price of it, ere yet to misery hurl'd,
Too late, too late, gives sneering Fate her lessons in the world.

NIGHT THOUGHTS AT SEA.

Midnight closeth o'er the waves,
But the bold ship dances free,
Through her shrouds the sad wind raves
'l for nothing careth she:

Half her scant crew warmly slumbers
O'er the watery vault below,
Where, perchance, forgotten numbers
Midway float in ghastly show,
Balanc'd in the deep, dark green
Of that spectral oozy waste,
Like the Moslem's tale I ween
Of the coffin air-embrac'd:
Hark! what far off bells heard tolling
O'er the tossing waters wide,
Sounds like knell of Spirits knolling
For the dead on every side?
Now a wailing voice sweeps by
Like a bride's from gladness hurried
In the cold dark grave to lie
Far from love and rapture buried:
Still the sailor drowsy sleepeth
Rock'd upon the dashing wave,
That around him ceaseless leapeth,
As his frail life it would crave:
On the sails the moonlight streaming
Bids strange shadows quicken round;
Till I gaze like one in dreaming,
Or by goblin fancies bound;
As a dying eagle quivers,
Flaps the mainsail in the breeze,
While the tall mast bends and shivers
Torn from midst his brother trees,
Near some fierce Norwegian torrent,
Where they beetling crest a hill,

Like the plumes of Odin horrent
As he strides from cavern still;
Leaving wondrous Rinda sleeking
Softly grand her flowing hair—
Lo! their giant boughs are creaking
With strange notes of wild despair;
As the torturing wind comes nigh them
Bending down each sullen head,
And with raging threats doth try them,
Whispering mystic tales of dread;
Till the hunter pausing trembles,
For he thinks each white line there
Where the cold moon shines resembles
Bone of hunter bleach'd and bare,
And the wiry wolf he'd rather,
Or the grizzly mother bear,
Than stalk mid those shadows farther,
Tempt in rage from out their lair—
Thus I gaze upon yon white deck,
Where the moon through rattlin'd shrouds
Shadowing peeps like some world's bright wreck
Driving through the rifted clouds;
And I think of sailors storm-tost
Drowning in the Northern seas—
See the skies yon helpless form lost
Stooping mock like boughs of trees!
In his ears the waters bubble,
In his eyes gleams fiery spray,
Dark-pois'd 'neath the billows' trouble

Shark-like monsters wait their prey,
With huge leaden orbits glare they,
Finn'd like grandam's starch'd neck-ruff;
Rudder-like their tails move, stare they
All upon him sinking—"Luff!"
Hoarsely some one near me screams;
Like a shoal of scar'd fish fly past
All my fancy's fever'd dreams,
As a mighty ship comes by fast;
Quick strange gleams of phosphorus bringing
On she labours through the seas;
Round her bowsprit eager clinging
Swarms of seamen look like bees,
As they furl the jib wild striving
To be free—she comes! she flies!
Close her huge, black side is driving
Near us with unearthly cries;
And her lights like fire-flies glitter
Flitting round some Indian pall
Quick borne by, or ebon litter
Through the jungle sedges tall:
Into darkness she hath vanish'd
As if she had never been—
Soon the morn, my night-thoughts banish'd,
Rising red is slowly seen.

THE ORANGE SELLERS*.

A DIDACTIC POEM.

" For years past I've seen these poor wretches ill-treated
And of bread, life, and freedom by law-hirelings cheated ;
Not for stopping the path, or creating a crowd,
Dire offences that cry 'neath God's Heaven aloud,
But the trade is too small in the eyes of the proud.
For vulgarity only with thousands doth buy
Its mercantile license from those plac'd on high.
* * * * *
Oh ! 'tis sad in the grey of the morn to be told
To get up from a door-step when stiffen'd with cold :
Of a monster like this I have oft dreamt in fear,
With his hard knuckles doubled close in at your ear;
Just like Fate's iron hand, as it grasps with no glove on
Some sad struggling wretch that refuses to move on."

We're told in Scripture, on a Sabbath morn,
Christ bid the hunger'd pluck the ears of corn :
When offering fruit to thirsty passers-by
St. Andrew's Parish chokes the orphan's cry,
Drags the poor sufferer to a living tomb,
While gorgeous beadles frown in holy gloom.

* Founded on a police case, when it was decided by a worthy magistrate that those who hawked small wares for their living were not necessarily committing an offence against the laws. He discharged the culprits, therefore, after they had been locked up all night for the sin of selling oranges.

Once, round their Lord, the "little children" press'd
Whom "*Christian*" monsters drive from guilty rest,
He bid them come to Him—His followers cold,
Life, food, room—all refuse; save parish "*Mould!*"
Yet these dare bend in Church with odious rant,
As if their God were blind and deaf to cant;
As with mock words without a blush of shame
They wrong Christ's memory and insult His name.

See yonder infant rack'd by hungry pangs,
In terror marks the fierce approach of "Fangs;"
That cruel guardian, who with ceaseless spite
Molests the poor, to guard the rich man's right.
What! sinking, place upon the ground her load?—
Quick, into life his threats her numbness goad:
Cold, wet, and famish'd crawls she onward home,
Or with her stock unsold doth listless roam.
Still sterner oft her fate, on Holborn-hill
A child's faint treble late with accents shrill
Cried "oranges!" whilst on the other side
A Parish Guardian stalk'd to Church in pride,
To utter loud response in lowliest prayer,
Erect, and grac'd with Mammon's saintliest air:
Next Sunday, fresh instructions arm'd "A one,"
Who Herod's war with children quick begun:
Eliza Feeble first faint victim fell

And smooth'd a ratepayer's prosperous path to hell,
Whose "footway was obstructed" here on earth—
Let angels weep and demons split with mirth
To see the game of wolf and lamb thus play'd,
'Twixt the stern Guardian and the shrinking maid.

"Oh! let me go, my mother's sick," she cries,
"E'en now with hunger little Tommy dies:
There's seven of us—let me go, kind Sir!"—
"D—n thee, come on, or else I'll make thee stir!"
Perchance, some woman taunts the cruel deed,
Whose rifled heart for others still can bleed;
Her three policemen seize with fury wild
To swell their triumph o'er the fainting child:
Next morn they swear what o'er their ale and gin
Through night they've plann'd, while she's locked safely in:
A month's hard labour sets the poor wretch free—
The living ghost of man's foul perjury—
Through the wet streets to seek an early grave,
Stung by injustice foul to drink and rave,
Till her cheap coffin meets his marriage train
Whose lustful moment caus'd her world of pain.

The "Inspector" views the child and basket frail,
Surveys her bending form and features pale ;
Then, "lock her up!" as if the deed were sweet,
He cries, "we'll teach her to obstruct the street."—
(As if God's air were not the boon of all,
And freedom spurn'd the thing that's poor and small).
To a foul den she's hurried: her scant store
By rough hands pilfer'd on that perjur'd floor,
Where to the poor their innocence is guilt,
Belief a wanton, Truth an envious jilt—
Here drunken women scream, whose noisome breath,
Like scent from graves, infects the air with death ;
Here curse, and oath, and jest obscene appal,
While sin infectious clings around to all—
Till on the morrow she may learn her fate,
Where the sour clerk sits 'neath the Justice' state.

Meanwhile the mute despair, the mutter'd groan,
The infant's cry, the mother's anxious moan,
Mark her sad absence from the squalid haunt
Where ragged misery rocks her children gaunt :
A drunken footstep or the dripping rain,
The weeping creatures stir with hope-fraught pain.

The night wears on, and hunger yields to fear,
Each eye wanes hollow as the morn breaks clear:
They knew some fearful chance alone could keep
Yon hapless maiden from her pallet sleep—
That sleep, the life of wretched souls below;
That sleep, the death of sad ones' daily woe*:
They *knew* some dread mishap alone had kept
Her whom their eyes so fondly, idly, wept;
E'en when asleep, she still came staggering back—
Her tender feet still knew the stony track
To that mean spot where all she lov'd were laid—
Her instinct failed not, e'en had strength betray'd.
Oh! who can paint the scene of wild despair
When cruel sunbeams lit that chamber bare,
And told with sickening gleam she was not there?
Stern look'd the angel by whose care was given
Their broken prayer to One above in Heaven.

The hour arrives—through smell of greasy throng
The frighten'd child to court is dragg'd along:
With lies close button'd 'neath their great-coats tight,
Policemen whisker'd mock the soul of right:

* Let me not be accused of plagiarism from the mighty master of the Drama—

"Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care,
The death of each day's life."

There hangs her head the Cyprian lately bold,
There calls God witness to her tongue the scold;
There dull-ey'd beggary fronts the haggard morn,
The dizzy drunkard hides his garments torn,
The small sharp urchin caught in tutor'd theft
Grins unconcern'd, of Jewish home bereft—
Guilt reeks around and poverty supplies
The air of guilt at least to virtuous eyes:
A thief or beggar it must be confest
Are much the same, save when the thief's well drest,
Then proof is needed to affix the crime;
The penal stigma limping asks for time;
Then bail, and fine, and alibi are near,
And 'A one' fondly lingers in the rear;
No longer squinting eyes round corners see,
Nor what 'B' says is back'd by 'C' and 'D';
But blindness, deafness, memory all combine,
Substract the bribe and lighten thus the fine.

Poor, piteous, 'Lizzy' waits for long her turn—
Her cold limbs tremble, fever'd brow doth burn—
A swindling case to which great interest hangs
Full two hours keeps her 'neath the lee of 'Fangs;'
He has her ready, and the basket too—
Of oranges they'd only left a few;
Enough to prove her glaring Sabbath guilt
The rest, not eaten, on the road were spi'

Her blue eyes rov'd unconscious of the scene,
She scarcely knew what all that throng might mean;
Thought tawdry women, rogues were only there,
Because, like her, they poor and friendless were.
If that her mind from present fears did roam,
She only wondered what they said at home;
Her little brother's, mother's care-worn eyes
'Neath that low roof appeal with mute surprise;
Then, as she ponders o'er her wasted stock,
Small images of want and misery flock,
Cold bankrupt dews upon her forehead grow,
E'en freedom smiles no longer, link'd with woe.
Of vice no more than crochet-work she knew—
No stain around her friendless soul there grew:
The busy hum of rampant evil seems
To her like night-mare Fancy's broken dreams.
Not the small linnet in the gaoler's room
Of some great prison, cag'd in whitewash'd gloom,
Might less interpret oath or dismal slang,
Than clogg'd with guilt her soul's white pinions hang.
Not wild flower pluck'd to deck a murderer's breast
Dies less polluted in that place unblest—
Like her, unstain'd, it droops its fever'd head,
[illegible] beauty, all but modest virtue shed.

At length, "Next case!" the clerk impatient bawls:
"This way; stand here!" the gruff policeman calls—
"What has this child done?"
Quick the case is told.
The Guardian hems to clear away a cold:
The fruit and basket meet the Court's stern eyes,
The Justice frowns, the clerk looks wondrous wise.
"What is her crime?"—
"For days past we have seen
The footpath throng'd by creatures vile and mean—"
"Then 'twere as wise to pass on th' other side.
What else?"—
"To sell their odious fruit they've tried;
E'en I myself but yesternoon, 'tis true,
Fell, all amaz'd, amid the shouting crew—"
"Indeed, 'tis well thus honest bread to get:
What more? If this be all, the charge is met.
Policeman, speak!"—
"Your vership, all I knows,
This here child trod quite vicious on my toes;
And tho' she's young, I've seen her oft before,
There aint a wusser girl all London o'er;
She hung so heavy, too, upon the road,

For *me* and *him* she prov'd a precious load:
Besides, this basket here—"
" Step down! What next?
Who else will preach upon this living text?"—
And is it nought the Lord's Day thus to break?—
He made it day, you blackest night would make—"
" Your worship knows what pangs a Christian try
At hearing children 'Oranges' thus cry;
When on his road to offer incense meet
And prayer for mercy at the Eternal's feet:
The little wretches e'en pollute " the Day
Of Rest," by placing on the ground their tray
Or basket thus, when tired—a burning shame
To all who own a Christian's pious name—"
" I cannot deal with such a trifling charge:
Policeman, set yon helpless child at large!
Go search the poor-box. A sick Dives sent
Ten shillings lately for an object meant
*Not so deserving, as notorious made
By Sunday Journals in the way of trade:
I mark'd the morbid gift and kept it here,
To aid some wretch to fashion's soul less dear;
For thousands starve and crowds in busy street

* The excellent decision of a most worthy magistrate, Mr. Yardley, intercepted the gifts meant for notoriety to apply them to charity. " *O si sic Omnia!*" Would all were like him!

Rush heedless past, borne by on rapid feet:
Crouch'd on the bridge the wan wretch dreams
of food,
His only gift the parish coffin rude.
God 'visits' many with the stroke of death
Whom fellow-creatures grudge their scanty
breath:
*If Wakley censure, murmurs loud are heard
And fierce cabal to oust his worth is stirr'd:
Yes, none assist, save when theatric show
Adorns the deeds of "Angels here below."

Methinks, there was much boldness in the frown
That dar'd to look the moral despot down,
And plead the cause of suffering from the Bench,
From grim religion thus its prey to wrench,
Rob the stern bigot of his Sabbath boast,
And side with CHRIST when "*Christians*" rule
the roast.
Methinks, 'tis something new to see the Law
Unloose such victim from its iron jaw,
From cruel mesh let paltry fry escape;
While rampant wealth assumes an injur'd
shape,
And baffled saintship swears in vain a rape.

* Mr. H. M. Wakley, late Deputy Coroner, showed much feeling in the discharge of his duties, combined with a considerable amount of spirit and discretion. He insisted on calling starvation by its name, and not "visitation of God."

Hail! worthy Magistrate, who first declar'd
That sky and pavement might by all be shar'd;
That while the poor endure their baskets' weight,
They still may elbow footmen's liveried state,*
Bearing God's sacred Book, devotion's pride,
In gilt disguise, behind each Mammon bride:
Nay, more, with senses dull'd by grievous load,
By thee not forc'd to tempt the carriage road,
Lest Sabbath wealth should grind, 'neath rapid wheel,
The wretch whom misery still permits to feel.
Lo! as thy daring sentence met the light,
Each stiff Policeman stood more stiff with fright,
Each Beadle gasp'd, with purple nose grown pale,
The "Guardian" reel'd like one o'ercome with ale;
The Vestry felt the direful shock amaz'd,
And their dull eyes in solemn frenzy rais'd.
"What! Not convict a wretch, who thus profanes
The cold, drab Sabbath, urg'd by hunger's pains?
While we, with full-fed stomachs, walk or ride,
To kneel in Church, with hard, soft-cassock'd pride.
What! Shall the treadmill not revenge our wrong—
Nor oakum grind the orphan's nail grown long?

* Mr. Coombe decided that, as long as the hawkers did not put their baskets down, they could not be convicted. The *interpretation* of a law is almost as important as the law itself. What would Mr. Henry have decided?

Is idiot childhood thus to threat the face
Of smooth decorum, curl'd religion's grace?
Shall shoeless poor unlicens'd hawk their wares,
And thus disturb our pious, heavenly airs?
Shall perishable food not sooner rot?
(Our Sunday dinner smokes, our meal is hot.)
Shall godless pence be earn'd, while souls are dead
In those lean frames that only covet bread?
Shall he that hawks the base West-Indian pine
With mean discomfort mock our glut divine?
No! Let him die, while 'CANTWELL' soothes our ears,
And perfumes hell to lull dyspeptic fears."

Such is hypocrisy's fierce, stupid plaint,
Himself thus damns the self-accusing saint;
So argue those who ne'er their bosoms probe
Neath the dark fold of Pharisaic robe:
So speaks th' unliveried beadle, whose broad brim,
Like a black fungus, casts its shadow grim
O'er God's bright earth, till Mercy shuddering flies
Where camels rare thread rarer needles' eyes;
Where rich men enter "few and far between,"
And not *one* parish guardian e'er was seen:
So speak th' elect, who, since man bit the apple,
Would farm redemption like a West-end chapel;
Hang Christ Himself, if He their "trade" should libel,
And preach, but act the converse of, the B[illegible]

O curst Oppression! darker be your fate
Than that of all dark crimes begot by Hate—
Suspicion—Anger—fierce Revenge, with hair
Whose snake-like tresses writhe aloft in air:
They spring from human hearts, but you from stone;
They have some motive, you alone have none;
Save demon Malice, nurs'd in coldest pride—
So 'mid the rocks may clustering adders hide.
Yes, other sins may plead our purpose faint,
Our human weakness, sin's corroding taint,
Till passion, pardon'd, soar above the "Saint."
E'en Conscience oft is Danaë of all—
In her soft lap bright floods of Mammon fall;
Religion thus a price we thoughtless pay,
And purchase mock salvation's flowery way:
All, all is labell'd: bigots thus are bred;
The living pay for prayers to aid the dead:
Your drab enthusiast knows conviction's cost,
And not e'en fervour need be virtue lost;
As if, when brib'd by rich Wesleyan hope,
The *Times* refus'd to "advertise" the Pope.
The bought opinion weighs down cheap belief;
Till real doubt acquits the wealthy thief.

Ye who would smooth the tide of bitter song,
Reproof call hate and censure brand with wrong;
Because ye stand condemn'd, 'tis not for you
Call down Pity from yon skies of blue;

The storm shall best chastise your impious deeds,
The heart, once frozen, shatters—never bleeds:
Not rage, but tears, the glorious meed I ask;
Hate shall not crush, but mercy crown my task.
Yet deem I write in sorrow, not in spite,
And gaze on better things with pure delight:
The sombrest Prophet in the Scripture griev'd,
Not hated—thus be my fond verse believ'd:
Judge not my nature sour, if thus I turn
To light a moral pile for knaves to burn;
E'en the stern Muse the poison'd cup that bears
Weeps as she wounds—then heals with softest cares.
Borne on the current of indignant verse,
I ceas'd the child's faint sorrows to rehearse:
What matter those who starve unseen and hid
So the bright sunbeams of their forms be rid?
Nay, bring them not to vex the flaunting proud,
Or grieve in rags amid the heartless crowd:
Their filthy squalor only serves them right
For being drawbacks to your smooth delight:
As 'twere a sight too hideous to endure,
Come blackest night, and veil those "horrid poor!"

Poor Lizzy was a flow'r, for whose soft eyes
The bitterest wind that reckless onward flies
Had flung a tyrant's passing light embrace,
As one whose beauty decks a lowlier race;

She was of those whom Nature's impulse wild
Shows, as a mother lifts her favourite child
To some gay pageant all in artless pride;
But Nature's darling oft is Misery's bride.

Need I describe her welcome home?—O Joy!
Pure vein of gold 'mid wretchedness' alloy,
Bright pearl of dark vicissitude, up-torn
By hands convuls'd from cruel depths forlorn,
Thou to the rich art Fortune's harlot kiss
That wakes no transport, yields no rapturous bliss;
But on the humble, when thou deign'st to shine,
Sun of the heart, mak'st all around divine!

Hast thou ere seen some trifling aid bestow'd
On one who fainting sinks beneath life's load
In the wet twilight of a winter's day,
Homeless, not childless, with her babes astray?
Some thin, pale woman left, with sorrowing breath,
By cold seducer, or relentless Death—
(Seducers live; but needy husbands die,
The Emigrants of Death: he bids them fly
By a quick passage to some happier shore:
What matter where, since they come back no more?)—

Hast thou such creature seen, if such a gift
Touch her damp hand, as will from misery lift
A day, a week, perchance a month ?—
" 'Tis gold !"
She almost shrieks—let not the rest be told—
Thou would'st not wait her thanks, or cruel say
" 'Tis a mistake;" but onward wend'st thy way;
Though by that light thy charity deceiv'd
Thy purse left empty and thy prudence griev'd—
Nay, say not " griev'd"—an Angel wrote 'twas gold,
Thy willing gift, and thus in Heaven was told.
On the proud bridge that yokes the city's wealth,
Where beggars, nich'd and dozing, die by stealth,
I saw a mother, in whose chill embrace
Two children lay, with Sorrow face to face :
She ask'd for alms ; a guinea met her stare ;
And he that gave it left a statue there,
So fix'd, so wan, so motionless—Despair
Touch'd by Surprise—no choking cry or prayer;
She could not even clasp her hands in air;
But on her knees I mark'd her grateful fall
In what rich fools a *tableau* love to call.

Such was the joy that welcom'd Lizzy back,
E'en hunger smil'd oblivious of its rack :
Think you the rich command such happy
That weep o'er novels, scenic transports

Say thou, whose cold pretension gives thy name
To gild the hollow deed of virtuous fame;
Ye, who with gracious smiles to Heaven lend
Your mite of Fashion, misery's wrongs to mend;
Nor think how little may such gift bested
The heart that ne'er for real sufferings bled;
Ye, who the ribbon'd stall, the fancy-fair,
Blooming attend with pity *debonnaire*,
Or weave the dance, or flirt for mercy's sake;
Till Charity seem but a tutor'd rake,
A season *belle*, a matron there intent
To marry daughters, *all* on goodness bent;
Say, in the compass of your daily thought,
Your sweet designs, your feeling highly wrought,
If such a picture haunted e'er your sleep,
Bade your tir'd eyes still later vigil keep,
The muslin curtains of your soul displac'd,
And one true thought of outward suffering trac'd?

'Neath the same Heav'n, 'tis true, ye kneel and pray;
But human china spurns the human clay.

Yet why thus ask a question all in vain?
Why grieve for virtue, or why mourn for pain?
Touch not the joys or sorrows of the poor;
Sacred the burden their sad souls endure!
Heaven watches all above yon waveless sky:
Each Misery wings an angel flight on high!

Come, be it mine to end in pleasing strain;
With a soft touch paint out this cruel stain
From human nature; since one brightest trait
Late warm'd my bosom with its genial ray.

In a proud square, where wealth and power reside,
Upon its loftiest mansion's steps I spied
An agèd woman selling her small store,
Whom no rude porter frighten'd from the door,
No guest disturb'd, no inmate drove away,
But quite at ease, she sat there day by day;
*For she who rul'd that mansion wide had said
The poor old creature there might earn her bread.
Bright, blest example of a feeling heart!
There shone reveal'd religion's better part:
Let the world cavil at the homely sight—
Behold! an Angel sits there cloth'd in light,
That form disguis'd shall ope Heaven's gates above,
For the small deed that show'd a world of love:
No proud decorum whisper'd "Drive her hence!"
No frigid pride cried "Elsewhere earn thy pence;

* The wife of a late distinguished Judge, whose death was tragical, as it was glorious. Those who have visited there will easily recognise the original of the sketch I have drawn.

Hence, vile excrescence! Beadle, seize your
prey!"
But kind words bid the "Orange-seller" stay.
Oh! noble contrast to the worldly crew,
Whose triumphs base the feeble poor pursue—
Thy constant mission consolation's gift,
The kindly present, bed-side prayer and shrift—
Long may thine acts endure—thy tender grace
Shine undisturb'd, and leave a lasting trace;
For this more virtue in mankind I'll see,
And bless the world for charity and thee.

THE BALL ROOM.

A FRAGMENT.

In a dazzling hall they are gather'd all,
'Twas the last merry dance to be,
Many said they had ne'er known a scene so fair,
When the clock told the hour of three,
And their eyes flash'd bright, for the dull morn's
light
With cold breath had not come there,
With her pallid streak on the languid cheek
And fingers in uncurl'd hair.

And there were whispers mid the dances,
And soft diluted smiles and glances,

With sphinx-like riddles of the face
Where no emotion leaves a trace;
Lisp, murmur, drawl in dizzy sound
With foreign jargon heard around:
Some looks of adoration seen
Truer than those in Church I ween,
The throne of Heaven to mock ere long
That blind and selfish herd among:—
And jewels rare with flowers blent,
And something said with nothing meant,
And silks and satins softness lent
To stony bosoms cold and vile,
With dull pretension, languid wile,
The thought suppress'd, the treacherous smile,
And all the din of creatures vain,
Whose grief is nought, whose joy is pain.

Indeed 'twould angels down entice
  Such wreathèd smiles and heads to view—
Society's bright Paradise—
  Bald men and agèd women too,
To grave-clothes and the playful worm
  Perchance a trifle overdue—
How gracefully they spend the term!
  All smiling without thought of Death—
They've deck'd the monster o'er with flowers;
  (You'll find him only in their breath)
They've powder'd Time and roug'd the Hours!

And there were young hearts beating there
Whose bosoms were their sepulchre,

So tightly lac'd and crost in love—
Each vulture Mother with her dove,
A trembling, peaking sacrifice
To *roués* rich in gold and vice;
And yet the school'd, accomplish'd things
Smil'd sweetly o'er their heart's despair,
So clipt and scorch'd their natural wings
They gasp'd quite lively in the air,
Where legal Prostitution found
Her priestesses enthron'd around,
Maternal Vampires sitting there,
With hideous, wrinkled bosoms bare,
Jewell'd and feather'd in decay,
Grim models of old painted clay.

And there were Stars and Ribands worn
By greasy heirs to ancient race,
Dull, moral lepers, helpless born
Nature's true butlers out of place:
And there were scrubs and footmen to these butlers,
Toady on toady, in obscene array,
Effeminacy's minions, pimps and sutlers,
Round Fashion's standard, o'er the mind's decay;
And well-bred, soulless young patrician faces,
Still with their chisell'd lip and frigid sneer,
Mistaking ever for the frolic graces
The tawdry Thyads round slain Reason's bier.

Then there were Spinsters trying to be clever
And witty, but in malice ever ending;
Like busy witches some rich Author ever
Buoy'd with false hopes of letter'd glory sending:
With poets metaphysical and bilious,
Whose wintry smile the loving sempstress pains;
And brewers' earl-wed daughters supercilious,
Like Venus froth-sprung—from a sea of grains.

And there were cant religionists a few,
Who ne'er themselves would sin in any way shun,
Seeking their soul's bill ever to renew
By promises of others' deep damnation;
And inward Atheists, who God adore,
Secure in lightning-rods, beneath the steeple,
"Because that kind of thing is right before
One's servants and the common sort of people."
Others, with fusion like of mind and look,
Who ne'er, in thought, did their own being start from,
Yet own'd the Bible was a dear, good book,
Like evening neckcloth white, unsafe to part from.

* * * *

And some that long'd to be at rest,
Shut from the glare of that false scene,
To tear the dagger from the breast,
That perchance held there close had been

THE DIRGE OF ERIN*.

Yoke-mate of bondage to the British car,
Sad Ireland, stagger to thy home, the grave;
Thou hast no other, save in gloom afar
Beyond the desert of the western wave.

"Increase and multiply" was God's command,
He gemm'd the ocean with thine emerald shore;
Man bids thy ghastly legions quit the strand,
Or sink benumb'd in death to live no more.

A double Charon bides his palsied freight,
On each black hull is figur'd wild despair;
To quit thy country, or to die, thy fate;
One dismal sign-post meets thy vacant stare.

* It may be urged, with reference to this poem, that Ireland is now in an improving state. The "sick man" is being restored by process of transfusion. Be it so: still in the author's opinion, the depopulation of Ireland and her frightful misgovernment, including the wicked and stupid infliction of the maintenance of a dominant, hostile creed, and the cowardly, or treacherous, patronage of a rebellious one, present a picture not easily to be blotted out of the page of history. Nor is the curse ended here. Hatred towards England burns in the breast of millions of emigrants and children of emigrants in America. And when the struggle of England for greatness, or existence, shall commence, she will find her loss in the dispersion of the "Celt," and her danger in the machinations of a remorseless priesthood.

The dragon's teeth are sown. Behold arise
A crop of Death! Want's fearful shadows fall;
Her icy sickle gleams 'neath frowning skies,
And o'er the cradle dooms the fate of all.

Time was, mirth sparkling laugh'd or legend wept,
'Mid fancy's dew-drops on thy verdant shore;
Thy daughters danc'd, thy sons athletic leapt:
Alas! nor song, nor dance, may frolic more.

E'en the wild pensive notes of Moore are fled,
With the gay numbers of his softer lyre:
Grief dares not wail amid the famish'd dead,
Yon fearful charnel bids e'en grief expire.

Mute is the land's despair. The wrong too deep
For idle words their sad complaint to give—
Hope flies forlorn, or pallid sinks to sleep;
'Tis Hope alone bids mournful genius live.

I saw one linger by the crimson'd waves,
Like the last shadow round a funeral pyre;
His cheek was hollow as his island caves,
His blue eyes wander'd with prophetic fire.

His hair fell wildly as the gleanings snatch'd
By orphan fingers from the trampled clay;
Each dry sharp bone alternate hollows match'd
The deep-sown furrows of a live decay.

The Lazarus of a nation seem'd he there,
Call'd forth to warn the rich. Methought the scent
Of graves came mingled with the mountain air;
Cold evening mists their blighting horror lent:

Thick-flocking voices whisper'd of the tomb,
Telling their woes with chill mysterious breath;
Dark Spirits cloud-like hurried through the gloom,
As dead leaves eddy round the feet of Death.

So stood he—whilst his mantle in the wind
Stream'd like the canvass on a tottering mast:
Awhile he stood, but could no utterance find,
His quivering lips mov'd idly in the blast.

The smile upon his lips for ever flown,
Had left them seal'd with stamp of frenzied wrong—
The wrong he bore from others, not his own—
At length pour'd forth the flood of broken song—

" Strike not the harp again! but let each string
Twirl in the blast upon a gloomy shore,
Where the waves moan, and phantom sea-bells ring
Their island funeral—Strike the harp no more.

" Touch not another string. It were to mock
The ghost of pale destruction flitting round:
The lightest breath of melody would shock—
The shatter'd harp lies mouldering on the ground.

" Come, sound another strain! Bring forth the gong
Of cavernous hunger; let the drum be stirr'd
By living Spectres rattling dragg'd along;
The sharp triangle's iron rings be heard;

" Want's hollow clattering bones; the sad shrill fife
Play'd on by children born with faces old—
Starvation's lingering round—the dirge of life—
By strains like these let Erin's fate be told.

" Yet, 'mid the torturing pangs of slow decay,
Where tugs the vulture at a people's breast--
How few the crimes, how vast the misery, say!
Let cruel rulers speak with lips unblest.

" Lo! where the savage murderer glides along,
His dark soul pictur'd in his face of night;
Yet starving vengeance scorns the plunderer's wrong;
A deed of blood, not meanness, shocks the light.

" See the mute beggar through yon window stare,
Where Plenty reigns, and food is heap'd around,
Untempted; till, with dull reproachful glare,
His gaunt form sinks down on the flinty ground.

" Speak out, ye nations! Back for many an age
Ransack your hidden catalogues of grief:
No tale like this is grav'd on Famine's page,
To palsy wonder and to mock belief.

" His eyes grow dim; the voices of the crowd,
Like angry waters o'er his fading brain
Rush with harsh grating murmurs fierce and loud;
Then, as life ebbs, recede and die again.

" Take up and hide his ghastly frame—Quick! Heap
Dark mould upon his ribs, and fill them out
With unaccusing earth, six inches deep—
Strew Pity's eye-dust to the world without.

" Place him not deep beneath the cold, damp sod,
When sounds the trumpet, on the day of love
And wrath, he thus shall soonest meet his God
And tell the story of his wrongs above:

" Tell how he perish'd, 'mid no lack of food,
Heaven's mystic doom; read rich men's bills
of fare;
Speak frightful waste in ears of angels good;
Rehearse the sorrows of his mute despair.

" No lying witness then, no cunning foe
Shall turn the spring of mercy from his door;
No curst dissembler dare disguise his woe,
Or cruel spoiler rob him o'er and o'er.

" The sad Hungarian and the trampled Pole,
Each at his side, their piteous tale shall plead;
The wrong'd Italian bare his injur'd soul,
The brave Circassian not all idly bleed.

" See yonder leprous band—how all dismay'd
Hang low their furious heads round murder'd
Hope!
Each tyrant slave, who liberty betray'd,
The coward Emperor and the Judas Pope.

" There, Naples quivers, Haynau crouches low,
Like tiger scorch'd 'mid walls of living flame;
With that foul monster, mankind's deadliest foe,
The hireling scribe who stabs a nation's fame.

" There all shall meet—man's lying veil be torn
By Justice from the face of Truth sublime;
The tyrant sink engulph'd in fiery scorn,
Earth's greatest sufferers bear the pall of Time.

" Strike not the harp again! Let misery sleep.
To Heaven is fled each sigh. The dirge is o'er.
The tears refus'd by man let angels weep—
One wailing cry—then, Erin, wake no more!"

The last sounds died away, The gloomy pall
Of hollow Night had swept the Autumn wave:
I see the gleaming surges rise and fall,
I hear the sea-bells knell their island grave.

Nov. 1850.

THE DEVIL'S FLIGHT.

From his palace of crystal and steel,
In the great park of Hades, one night,
Leaving Judas a duplicate Seal,
Did the Fiend up to Earth wing his flight:
For he said, "All my favourites, down here below,
Speak of brotherly love amid sad human woe;"
And he'd heard to the ghost of a sable Jim Crow
A soul preach a sermon.

" One would fancy the world were so good,
So pious, so kind, and so true,

If my friends I have right understood,
Quite a paradise snug I shall view:
There's an island call'd England, philanthropy's nest,
Not content with themselves, they seduce all the rest
Up the back-stairs of Heaven—I'm told they're the best
Of the world. Let's determine."

Then he spread forth his wings like a pall,
Quickly fann'd the dull air into breath,
And through Chaos his vast shadows fall,
Like a frown on the cold face of Death:
As for those who would paint the arch-framer of wrong
Like a faded young noble with fair tresses long,
And a scar on his brow—Why, a fork'd tail and prong
Were as probable stuff, Sir.

On his pinions an Earthquake astray,
With a Pestilence mildew'd he caught,
And some vices the Flood wash'd away
To the "Great Exhibition" thus brought:
There was Moloch's own cruelty banish'd from earth,
Which he dropp'd upon Austria, passing in mirth;
It was pick'd up by HAYNAU, who gave it fr[illegible] birth;
Nay, improv'd in the rough,

He was much pleas'd with Italy's look*,
She was stain'd with the blood of the free;
'Neath Priest-rule, by hook or by crook,
Squalid Liberty bent to her knee:
There was stabbing abroad and police-search at home,
And the prisons were cramm'd full round Peter's big dome;
While the Pope gave gilt prayer-books to butchers at Rome:
"This will do," said the Devil.

As he flew o'er the fair land of France
He laugh'd for a good hour or two;
For he saw round an odd "Guy Faux" dance
A fierce motley turbulent crew:
'Twas an effigy stuff'd with gunpowder and straw,

* "He was much pleas'd with Italy's look, &c."—The two or three following facts illustrate this verse. The Pope has ordered 15,000 prayer books from a bookseller at Rome, to distribute to the French and Austrian soldiery. Signor Gigli, the author, was seized the other day, and thrown into prison merely on suspicion of having concealed his uncle, Colonel Barba. A family on the Piazza di Sant Eustachio were consigned to a dungeon for having a Protestant Bible in their house. Colonel Pichi was arrested contrary to the promises made him by the Government, and condemned to the gallies for twenty years. This I selected from accounts from Rome, in 1850.

Some called it Napoleon, others Chambòrd—
It was chance crown'd by folly. The dance was soon o'er;
Then in blood they did revel.

"If I ever on earth wish to reign,"
Said he, "here I'll as candidate show;
For a people so fickle and vain
Would soon cry, "Live old Scratch from below:
We have tried every novelty that can be crown'd,
Absolutist—People, the worst monarch found,
Lola Montes and Gomersal, Lord Brough'm renown'd;
Here's the Devil, let's have him!"

Next the Channel he pass'd in a trice,
But the Telegraph stopp'd to admire;
And he thought he would give some advice,
Lest the flat fish should nibble the wire:
"I've a *terminus*," quoth he, "in view for each end,
To a certain small square then the news I would send,
And as 'own correspondent' my services lend
For a few souls per annum."

When in London, the things that he saw,
Would the "*Chronicle's**" sad pages fill,

* *See* Mayhew's "Labour and the Poor," first lished in the "*Morning Chronicle.*"

Or the Blue-Books, that furnish each law,
Giving license to wealth to do ill;
But the three things that pleas'd him most, throughout the nation,
Were a Pharisee breakfast to lean Emigration,
A cotton-mill Sadducee slurring taxation,
And a foreign-paid journal.

There were many small facts to his mind—
How the magistrates gave their decision:
"I am out-done I verily find,
All my small courts below want revision:"
But he voted all Chancery practice a bore,
Why not rob, strip, and murder right off by the score?
And he said that for him it might soon be all o'er,
"Zounds, what rubbish infernal!"

He dwelt first by Exeter Hall,
Then slunk to a Catholic Chapel—
As a Bishop he bother'd them all
With the secret of Eve and her apple:
He thought if succession were worth but a fig,
His opinion might settle friend Gorham's tythe pig,
"Can you tell the first Chartist, since I'm the first Whig?"
Said one day the Devil.

From the Park to the workhouse and gaol,
At the opera, gibbet, and race,
He was seen without horns or a tail,
But Society's grin on his face;
And since riches were passport, he plac'd his account
At the very first banker's, and drew each amount,
With the air of a Rothschild, or fabulous Count
Only seen in a novel.

Then he studied "Statistics," to ring
Amid plenty the nose of Starvation,
And he found that the very best thing,
Next to death, was a grand Emigration:
It matter'd not much where the wretches were sent;
There was less hope to come back the farther they went,
And the Devil *his* blessings with "young England" blent,
On a Romanist show-day*.

* "A Romanist show-day."—It is probable, as far as I can judge, that the "Canterbury Settlement" is an emanation from the Tractarians.—(*Note* 1850). These gentlemen, in relation to avowed Papacy, are—"*a mel to blue-pill.*"

Next he ask'd if *one* "patriot" liv'd?
And the Government straight replied
"WALKER*!"
As for England, had *they* not contriv'd
Just to patch her, and mend her, and caulk her:
Then they show'd him the Dock-yard bills on a back shelf,
And how each in his turn grabb'd Posterity's pelf,
While the Nation's pawn-ticket he sold for himself,
Mark'd "Redemption on no day."

O'er his chocolate, scanning the "*Post*,"
Smil'd he oft at the Prostitute's fate,
Of man's crime both the warning and ghost,
Paying five-shilling fines to the State:
Still the Marchioness flaunted her sin gross and stark—
'Tis your lewdness in rags at which legal curs bark;
But he saw L—ra B—ll take her drive in the Park,
With the Nepaulese Princes.

* By the patriot "Walker," I mean Mr. G. A. Walker, so long opposed to intra-mural interments. The risk, expense, and fatigue incurred by this true philanthropist, have only caused his merits to be burked by a heartless administration, after adopting the results of his labours for upwards of sixteen years.

Honour, Honesty, Faith, were all gone,
Competition made Industry sly,
And Belief was as dead as a stone,
Which Tradition sang fell from the sky:
To steer clear of the law was all Virtue now sought,
The whole world was a market-place—everything bought—
Mediocrity stamp'd with lies currently wrought:
Money even *convinces!*

He saw Generosity die,
By the sons of his own bounty stricken,
And the flush of Truth pass to the sky
As her mute features orphan-like sicken:
He saw how the world was by mischief amus'd,
How feeling was ever in selfishness fus'd;
The payment of charity; friendship abus'd,
And confidence undone.

The Devil saw little to mend
And he liv'd on his capital gaily;
Till he met at the season's dull end,
With a smart lawyer from the Old Bailey;
To the City they went, when the *quid nunc* loquacious
Said, "Ask of your bankers a favour, if gracious,
A letter to view Barclay's vats so capacious
'Tis the best sight in Lond

He did so—The letter thus ran,
"An esteem'd friend of mine and my daughter
Will call, show him all that you can
And astonish his mind with your porter—"
When he went they a book brought with names full a score,
And they said, "If you please, we'll your autograph store,
We have Nicholas, Cobden, and Jung Bahadòor,
Have the kindness to write, Sir."

"What Nicholas, this?" said old Nick,
"That my character steals upon earth;
By my sceptre a beggarly trick!"
And he frown'd at the clerks' sober mirth:
In a rage took the pen and wrote angrily shaking-
Baron Satan and Lucifer, with his suite, taking
A survey of England.—The clerks fell a quaking
With wonder and fright, Sir.

One by one they stole out of the room,
And the news quickly whisper'd about,
How that Satan had come in a Brough'm
To take notes on the making of "stout:"
Soon a strong congregation of draymen outside
Gather'd gloomily round from the streets far and wide,
And they swore by their eyes, they would quick tan his hide,
If indeed 'twere the Devil.

It was true that his name might be good
On a cheque or a banker's post bill,
That by fashion the brimstone was stood,
But it stank in the nose of plain "Will:"
"Come out, you old vagabond," cried they aloud,
"W'ell soon show you your sort's not the sort here allow'd—"
"Prithee tell me, Asmodeus, what means the crowd?"
Said the Father of evil.

"Is this part of the making of ale?
It is far more like brewing a storm—"
"Perhaps 'tis nought," said his page growing pale,
"But a kind of rough welcome, in form—"
Quick with force catapultic there came a dead cat,
Hit our friend in the eye, "There, old fellow, take that!"
Now the door they break in and they 'bonnet' his hat,
And with mud and grains pelt him.

With torn coat down Bankside he ran,
In dismay seeking shelter in vain,
'Tis "Old Nick" cried child, woman, and man,
"Sarve him out, we shan't catch him again—"

Like a bustard surpris'd he'd no time to take
flight,
For his wings he had left off on earth the first
night,
Not a cab-stand was near, but the river in sight—
Here a few kicks they dealt him.

Few and broken the words that he said,
"My friend — Rothschild — thousands a
year—
I've to dine with a Duke—oh! my head—"
"Lord! Ve don't care for money nor peer;
Ve're a different style from them base sort of folk
As vould velcome a hangman to dine or to polk,
If they thought he vos vealthy, or bad English
spoke;
Ve are snobs in a passion.

"Nobs in fashion may ask you to dinner,
Ve don't ape gentility's ways,
And a sinner to us *his* a sinner,
Vere he goes and votever he pays—"
Here a broom-stick this lecture cut short: down
he went—
When there came the police, by Asmodeus sent:
He had sought shelter near, where a Jew money
lent,
And escap'd with a splashing.

Up a court full of filth Satan fled,
Where a slip of old Eve hid him fast,
Like a lean Falstaff, under a bed,
Till the storm had subsided and past:
And some dozen policemen, with big Serjeant Kite,
Had secur'd two poor girls, against whom they'd a spite,
With a cabman, who cried "Here's a precious delight!"
Pulling up from the city.

To be short, Satan got in a barge,
And arriv'd safe to Leicester's fam'd square;
And the *Times* did next morning enlarge
On his virtues with sympathy rare:
How the glaz'd cards of Fashion, to ask how he felt,
On the hall-porter rain'd, might old Cerberus melt,
Or the gravestones of orphans like frozen tears pelt,
In the church-yard of Pity.

But his feelings were sore as his bones,
So he vanish'd from London next day,
And a green carpet-bag full of stones,
Left behind him a long bill to pay

With an odd boot and whisker-brush, 'dickey' all torn—
L—dru R—ll—n's display, when he came here forlorn,
To pay gratitude's debt with the language of scorn,
And lampoon his asylum.

First to Palmerston wrote he—"My Lord,
Satan leaves in a frenzy your coast;
May an Englishman's name be abhorr'd
Nor a rag left of Cromwell's proud boast:
Be your mock intervention the laugh of the world,
Your fleets tow'd to Cherbourg, your whiskers uncurl'd;
Be the flags of old England in misery furl'd,
And the Frenchman defile 'em!

"May your Siamese Cobden and Bright,
On the flood-tide of folly and wrong,
To the whirlpool of gloomiest night
Guide the ship of the nation along:
Be your colonies lost by the rebel's dull sword,
Your invention surpass'd, and your merchandise floor'd,
Your Shakespeare forgotten, your burlesque ador'd,
Your best home, New Zealand.

" May the negroes you strive to set free
Forge the chains of a deadlier hate,
Than the world has had eyes yet to see,
In the gloom of a proud nation's fate:
Be your shopkeepers ruin'd, your commerce fast bound,
And your people by taxes and steam-engines ground;
May Philanthrophy seize you, and Mammon confound
That which *once* was a free land!

" May the Peace Congress work out its will,
'Till the soul of the pugilist die;
Whilst old women your garrisons fill,
And your powder be never kept dry:
May the Lion of England caught toothless asleep
To a polyglot foe furnish merriment cheap,
And the poor of the land o'er a Golgotha reap
Ghosts of sickly potatoes."

This letter he seal'd with black wax,
And then flew towards home o'er the isle,
Where starvation the stern peasant racks,
And the gaunt child refuses to smile:
Where a 'living death' turns up the soil in despair
For a coffinless grave, or a sustenance bare:
There was something the Devil had never seen, there,
'Mid these bowel-torn Catos

There came up a dull heavy moan*,
But he mark'd not a tear, or a cry,
'Twas the echo of misery's groan
That a sad Angel bore to the sky:
As he look'd down he saw where oppression had trod,
While the hearts of the people grew dull as a clod,
And *one* skeleton face seem'd to ask for a God
In the dark frowning heaven.

The eyes had a dull painful stare,
And the neck sank down into the chest;
On the skull grew in patches the hair,
As 'twere torn from the sepulchre's rest:
'Twas the frame of man walking forth livid and grey,
As if made by a Frankenstein out of decay;
And the children's bones clatter'd, but never at play:
Be their poor souls forgiven!

* For this description of starvation in Ireland, I must refer my readers to a work entitled "Gleanings in the West of Ireland," by the Hon. and Rev. S. G. Osborne. "Mr. Osborne," says a contemporary, "has studied famine and its effects not only with the eye of a philanthropist, but as a very anatomist." I have merely described what he did, and there is no exaggeration in these stanzas. History will record it as occurring during the manufacturing Jubilee in our sister island.

There was cold pallor under black rags,
And the dry skin hung down from the arm,
As if loose sticks were rattled in bags,
And the eye glar'd with life like a charm:
'Neath the chin was a hollow to nature unknown,
O'er the brow grew the hair that had fled from the crown,
Like an ape's, or an idiot's, moss on a stone,
Or an aftermath buried.

In the Union house, hovel, or grave,
Lay in silence their tenants alike;
Round one green church-yard wall doth the wave
Of the dim broad Atlantic loud strike:
But the coffin of him who the people betray'd*,
In a ghastly pawn saw he at Glasnevin laid—
Then the Devil he shudder'd, and, like one afraid,
His flight darkly hurried.

1850.

* The coffin of O'Connell was so held by creditors.

YE DYTTIE OF "ALTOUNE TOURES*."

O pleasaunt is ye moneth of Maie,
And swete are vernall shoures,
When sothe they bydde mee forthe to staie,
And dyne atte "Altoune Toures."

* The following "dyttie," as it is called, was collated in April, 1851, from two manuscripts, in the Lincoln's Inn Library. We are surprised that these have escaped Dr. Percy; but we have much pleasure in now giving the result of our discovery to the public. We have preferred throughout the earlier of these MSS.; but have filled up, or amended, an obscure line or two from the second. A learned friend supposes the "Lord Chancellère" to have been the famous William of Wykeham. For this, we must confess, wee see no reason. It is true that he held both lay and clerical appointments; but he seems to have been a man not likely to have been guilty of that which *Punch* would style snobbism. In the first and most valuable MS. is a black letter comment, stating that a young lady of much fortune and more comeliness, being deserted by her relations, fell into the hands of the monks, who were desirous of sequestrating her property to their uses, and nearly succeeded in the attempt. She, however, appealed to "ye kynge," as it is told, who directed her proper guardian, the "Lorde Chancellére," to hear and decide. It seems that this high functionary was much influenced by the courtesies of a bigoted aristocratic kinsman of the young lady, who is represented as fêting him at "Altoune Toures," and thereby endeavouring, it must confessed, with some partial success, to dispose

Myne herte! thys is a gamesome worlde,
The erth hath purfiled floures;
Lord Chancellère hys wigg hath curled:
Hee slepes at " Altoune Toures."

Come hyther, come hyther, mie faire yonge warde,
Busk ye in bonny bowers?
Soe sadd, shee sayde, wilt staie, my Lorde,
Ane weeke atte " Altoune Toures?"

Come hyther, come hyther, mie Ladye Abbèss,
Saie why thy pale fronte loures?
Now, by the roode, a boone! Ile bless
Thys moneth atte " Altoune Toures."

The proud Erl twies hys win hee spylt,
Sir Chancellère, 'tis ours
To bydde your presence, an Crist wyl't
Ane yere at " Altoune Toures."

him to regard with less severity the motives and conduct of the " Monkish powres." Our fair readers will be glad to learn, that finally the young lady was rescued from the cloister by Dan Cupid and Hymen. A young nobleman of distinction fell in love with her, and his influence procured her restoration to the world. The ballad writer, it would seem, contemplated a different result. It is probable that in delivering judgment, whereby the ward was restored to her convent, the Chancellor dwelt much on the hospitality he had received at " Altoune Toures." Hence the satire which is doubtless intended to be conveyed by the continued recurrence at the end of each verse of " Altoune Toures," an achievement, it must be admitted, displaying some rhyming ingenuity. The Poem, however, is only interesting now as a specimen of old English.

O, " Altoune Toures" are fayre to see,
And blacke are monkish powres;
The fayre yonge mayde to the nonnerie,
And the Peere to " Altoune Toures."

Merily doe the smale foules synge*
Whanne milke it sonest soures;
Alle in a darke veil forthe they brynge
Swete May† of " Altoune Toures."

And down hir chekis dyd yronne the bryne,
Hir sadd forme quails and cowres;
Lord Chancellère hee sypped hys win
Blythly atte " Altoune Toures,"

'Mid lothly nonnes hir lyfe is passed,
Wepynge the waefulle houres;
For weedes of blacke the gynghame's‡ cast
She wore at " Altoune Toures."

Ryghte to hir dethe the maden weped;
Fayre girles with meikle dowres,
God send ye a Chancellère hath not sleped
Or dyned atte " Altoune Toures."

* " Small foules"—in the second MS. " lytel birdes," evidently the work of a more modern hand.

† " Swete May."—May is probably not the actual name of the young lady. It frequently occurs in old writers, as a very pretty synonyme for maiden.

‡ The reading in the first MS. is " wardrope," which is probably right; I cannot find the word " gynghame" in any contemporaneous author; nor do I know its precise meaning, unless it be the modern gingham, which would be as great an anachronism as merino. [*Note by a correspondent of the* " ASINŒUM."]

END OF PART II.

PART III.

DRAMATIC EXTRACTS.

DRAMATIC EXTRACTS.

From "Crœsus, King of Lydia."

A STORM.

Hark! how the angry Gods do speak above—
Black-ribbèd chasms and deep wide-jaw'd caves,
The dim sepulchral tombs of nature's death,
Terrific bass re-echo to the skies
Rolling in one tempestuous symphony;
And with the shock the wild clouds weep amain;
Whilst agèd trees do part with giant boughs
That silent and unheeded fall to ground,
In such tremendous clatter. Blue fork'd gleams
That seem as they would blind us here on earth,
Pierce into graves and there light dead men's skulls
With fiery amazement; zig-zag play
At in and out around the ribs of death,
And in the flashing of thought strike and quell
Corruption's ghastly labours.

THE ACCIDENTS OF FORTUNE.

ORŒTES. ATYS.

Orœtes. Oh! 'tis a type
Of those whom I abhor; dull loiterers that
Perkt up on vain prosperity, like apes
Climb'd in the precincts of Jove's temple, grin
On Fortune's worthier giftless votaries:
Giving false names to things, false pride to names,
Loose; yet immoral sticklers for repute,
They have more shame to call their father, sire,
Though he were honest (which indeed they're not),
Than without trembling to blaspheme high Jove,
And scoff at Heaven's thunders.
Atys. Is he then
Of mean extraction?
Orœtes. Yes! and so doth seek
Gilding, by vain attrition of the great,
And thus he with small perseverance gains
Their vices, not their virtues.

THE CURSE OF WEALTH.

Blot on fair Nature's Scutcheon,
Nature's Laws
lected reel wild-clutching for support,

Which prosperous men avoid with careful ease,
Holding their robes tight round them, and the air,
Wherein they walk is deafen'd. They eat, drink,
With curious care, forgetting some that fast
For want of food despisèd; they sleep well,
Iron hearts in beds of down; but they shall wake
To a shrill summoning. Vain then to give
The portion small that now would work our weal,
Which, blinded, they deny. O Charity!
Loos'd from the awful side of Jove, descend!
Like mild-ey'd angel mourn a moment here,
And give our breath such pow'r, that it may steal
Into their golden palaces and frame
The one small syllable distinct of "*give*!"
Lest others feebly perish. Trumpet-tongued
Speak fearful warnings lest we sink and die,
But with our tyrants.

CONSOLATION FOR THE POOR.

ARTISANS. SADYATTES.

Art. And, even here, the poor man doth create
Round him his world of kindly sympathies,
Where the usurper steals not, or in vain;

For the small mangiest cur thanks not a king
To be his lord, if he obedience owe
Unto a mere starv'd forkèd beggar boy;
And, from the arms that bred him, were he ta'en,
Would howl within a palace.

Sady. 'Tis most true!

Second Art. Methought at times the king look'd sad to-day,
And one I heard that said—*Who'd be a king*
That all commands, whom all obey, if joy
That to the cheerful peasant sometimes comes
Unsought, he can't command, and say to grief,
" I know thee not, fly from my royal presence !"

THE BUST OF ISIS.

Lydis. Thou might'st as well deck Isis' stony bust
As my poor cousin; yesternight I pass'd
By that far chamber, where the face serene
Of the Egyptian goddess sculptur'd stands;
Unearthly sentiment in marble caught
From pale, ascetic priestess of old Nile,
Dreamy and wild and sweetly mystical:
And as I pass'd, pausing to look upon
The wondrous calmness of her face, I threw
The black gold-spangled veil that thou know'st well

Upon the statue's head, where it did fall
Like starry night pale lily curtaining:
I'll swear a pretty oath, thou would'st have smil'd,
To see how like my cousin then it grew,
As she does now to it.

DESCRIPTION OF HOUNDS IN A KENNEL.

ATYS, *being restrained by the desire of his father,* CRŒSUS, *from indulging in the sports of the field, visits his hounds in their kennel, and there falls under the observation of* MELES.

Meles. I left him leaning 'mid the kennell'd pack
Of his rough cold-nos'd friends with spotted hides;
Round him there gather'd in mute circle all—
One squatting on his haunch did gravely sit
Eyeing him wistfully; another stood
With paws familiar on his master's thigh,
Who forthwith patted half-a-dozen heads,
And then a dozen tongues straight licked his hands
Like struggling courtiers; one anon would go
Lap a few drops of water, then return
And wisely gaze again, as he would speak—
Whom the Prince thus address'd:

Thou askest me
To be thy compeer in the breezy field
And give thee practice; lest thy sharp white fangs
Grow yellow, like a miser's, with much thought
Of gold that doth him jaundice—know'st thou not
I am a king's son, therefore must not do
What my heart wills? A prince, and therefore sad?
But ye shall suffer not, my crazy ones,
To-morrow I will order you abroad,
And then, a dog shall be more free than prince
Hous'd in a royal palace—
Whereat the hound emphatic wags his tail
And the prince sighs and thinks of a long course,
And straightway pats the hairy mob again.

WINE USELESS TO DROWN SORROW.

Adrastus. Go! soulless crew—
Yet meant they well; and if the thing they boast
Wherewith the crawling ecstasy they love
Is gender'd; if their wine, in cups, in seas,
With its mean poison could entrance my woes,
I'd wreathe my brow with garlands, head their crew,
With flush'd face, sparkling eyes and strained shout
giant frenzy stagger through the street,

And not the curvèd grandeur of yon arch
Should loose the jutting of my shoulder wide,
Or free the glorious rolling of my step,
Striding like jocund demigod:
Nor Phœbus' early beams my senses cool,
Nor day, nor night a sobering influence bring—
So would I worship Bacchus.

DESCRIPTION OF ARIENIS.

Ay! Such a form
Endymion, in his longest, sweetest dream
On Latmos' top, when honeysuckles wav'd
Amid the silken tangles of his hair
Their spendthrift blossoms, and the green cool turf
In the pale light with droplets ever winkt
To the enamour'd queen of that witch'd hour,
Smiling imagin'd never! Such a face
Did ne'er make Paris heave a sobbing sigh,
As round him Heaven's resplendent beauties all
Knitted their hands on Ida, by Love's queen
Invited—her arch'd neck; her liquid eyes,
Like desert shy gazelle; her virgin mien
Eager, astonish'd, bold and coy by turns;
Her glossy hair; her fresh and coral lip,
Like sparkling sea-nymph's, that on deep clear wave

By rocky islet sails and beck'ning sings
A sweet monotony of charmèd song,
Strange, old and passionless;—her brow!
The shell-like convolutions of her ear,
Transparent, tiny portal to a heart
That never throbb'd to any lover's plaint,
Or selfish wiles—these! these! her foot too prest
Upon the earth in pettish, yet proud guise;
Her swelling instep rising softlier than
The lawny greens of Tmolus; her white breast
More undulating, snowy, dazzling, fine,
Than dream of Cytherea's stately swans
Waving beneath the half-clos'd lids at noon,
Warm'd by the kisses of a turquoise sky
From rapt Elysium stolen—these! had Fate
Presented dear occasion, neath her gaze
I could have done the deeds of demi-gods;
Bleeding, expiring, pale, have still yet rush'd
To clasp her pure white robe with hand convuls'd,
So might I from her bosom's treasure win
The gentle suffrage of a timid sigh,
To waft me through the welcome grave to bliss,
By her remember'd as a gallant soul
That car'd not for itself—to frenzy loving her.

EGOTISM IN BEAUTY.

ADRASTUS—ARIENIS.

Arien. Your love was false?
Adras. Nay, she had not the heart
E'en to be false: beauteous, her beauty sprang
From that cold egotism blooming fresh
Mid the bereavements of a Niobe:
She was propriety's fair bodying,
And when those round us frown'd upon her love
It sicken'd like a rootless weed and died.
Arien. Alas! it should have grown through wind and storm,
And cruel lopping of the steel, a tree,
Where a true heart might shelter glad and warm
Through all the ravings of adversity;
Or rather like a meek and clinging plant
That hath enlac'd an oak in summer time,
Should in the season of his trouble when
The bolt of Heav'n had palsied his great strength
Alone, with tender aid, have still sustain'd him.
Oh, such, methought, was Love!

FEMALE SWEETNESS OF DISPOSITION.

You know not Arienis—Anger she
Knows not; but rather Melancholy

Doth rapt sit by her side soft-teaching her
The spells of patience and mild love of all.
The shyest creatures ever came to her;
The very birds her white hand hath set free
From prison-home. Buoy'd on a limber twig
Awhile they danc'd in small relief against
The cloudless summer sky; but ere cold winds
Could make their little bodies tremble, they
Came back and sought her velvet hand again.

THE TAX ON ROYALTY.

Father! I have found
'Tis not so happy to be serv'd as lov'd:
Yes! there are moments, it weighs heavily
To be a king—to have all eyes upon one:
To have each look, smile, frown weigh'd, meted
Unto the popular craving and demand [out,
By hearsay dull; as thus—His majesty
Cough'd thrice, was pale, his beard was trimm'd just so;
His daughter's griev'd—a quarrel late they had,
About the fashion of a page's suit—
His thoughts are not his own; he's pleas'd or vex'd
At what he never yet did hear of, see:
... subjects all from prying eyes retire
... lear, domestic hearth; the palace is

The hostelry of rude and wanton minds;
Where each, in fancy, gapes and stares and flings
His loose unbutton'd length upon the ground,
That should be sacred to high courtesy.

THE LION HUNT.

ATYS—ORŒTES.

Orœtes. I would that thou had'st seen them, my dear lord,
How circled round they held him still at bay,
And car'd not for his roaring, or the wind,
That sway'd the mighty forest trees about,
Which creak'd and groan'd above, as he below
Did wreathe his knotted muscles, lash his sides,
And light the cavern with his eyes of fire
Blazing as they would scorch the sun-dried mane
Frightful uprear'd around his massy head.

Atys. Brave dogs!

Orœtes. Ay, brave indeed. The lion tore
Their pretty coats with his fierce glistening fangs,
And still they heeded not; but op'd like tombs
Tier after tier, their crimson ravenous mouths
Upon the royal victim, whose hoarse throat
Did bellow vengeance, like thy father's, when
The nations vex him, till by numbers spent

And javelins and arrows that bit deep
Into his glowing entrails, his eye died
In sullen dimness, and his horrent tail
Convuls'd did feebly flap the miry ground,
Wet with his blood; his stormy roaring fell
Into autumnal moaning of the wind,
And hissing died away, till all was still.

Atys. I would I had been there!

Orœtes. It was a beast
Worthy the weapon of a great king's son.

Atys. Said'st thou that Hector's dead?

Orœtes. The poor hound fell
Crush'd at the onset by the monster's paw,
And then an arrow pinn'd him to the ground,
Meant for the lion; after all was o'er
I brought him water in the palms o' my hands,
But once he touch'd it, then fell licking me
As though he moisture sought alone, to show
After his own poor fashion, his great love
To tyrant man: I'm not asham'd to own
My tears did mingle with the blood and mire
Where his sad couch was laid.

Atys. Where left you him?

Orœtes. As the loud horn did wind a gallant mort,
He rais'd himself and bay'd quite suddenly,
As 'twere with triumph; from his nostril wide
The red stream spouted, he fell on my feet
Dead! we did spare our mantles for his bier

A horn and arrows and my drinking cup,
And buried him in the dead monarch's home,
Piling the mouth with mighty branches torn
From pine and oak that solemn frown above;
And so we left him.

A WOMAN'S DISSIMULATION IN LOVE.

O woman! when thou lovest,
As the scar'd plover wiles the spoiler's step
From where her trembling heart lies with her eggs
Or callow young, are thy devices seen
By one who knows where thy fond fancy points;
How thou wilt ask a thousand nothings, with
As many blushing treasons to thy thought,
Ere thou wilt ask of him for whom thou pinest;
How thou wilt suffer from anxiety,
Ere thou wilt ask what, if thou did'st not love,
'Twould cost thee nought to say, so natural
It would become thy lip.

THE HOMICIDE'S FLIGHT.

O 'tis true—I met him now,
And death shone in his eye—I spoke to him,
But he did answer nought. A faint, white

Spread its soft horror o'er his conscious face,
And then he seem'd to sicken and grow faint,
And let connexion with the things around him
Slip from his aspen hand that open'd wide,
Whose bristling fingers pointed; beaded sweat
Stood on his forehead, like the mildew'd damp,
Seen on sepulchral marble—his lips mov'd;
But ere the sound did come, he fled straight on,
With eyebrows wreath'd, like those of him who first,
Sole thinking to alarm the innocent Sleep,
Saw green Corruption there, and shrieking nam'd
The thing he gaz'd on—" Death !"

CHARITY SPRUNG FROM MISFORTUNE.

Wisdom's light
Is oftenest but a torch lit at the funeral
Of Joy. It is most strange
How misery doth wake the sleeping sense
Of others' slighted woes. I have known one,
Who, in the blind abandonment of wealth
Did riot and ne'er gave; but when the form
Of pinching Need came near him, so that he
Might read the wrinkled anguish of her face,
Unto a beggar but one step more poor
Than he might be himself, he would give gold,
Sighing such grief to notice.

Oh, the poor
Are the poor's almoners, else would die crowds
That none know how they live—how life in them
Still feebly lurks from morn to ghastly eve,
From eve to haggard morn.

SORROW NOT TO BE BRIBED.

This indeed we know,
No golden coin will bribe the shrivell'd grasp
Of Sorrow; and the awful eye of kings frights not
Grief from her fated quarry; circling round
Crown or tiara, still she stoops the same,
And plumes the shrinking head of majesty.

THE MAGNANIMITY OF CRŒSUS.

(Adrastus, a Phrygian Prince, having accidentally slain his own brother, received purification, after the manner of the times, at the Court of Crœsus, King of Lydia, whither he had betaken himself as a suppliant. At a hunting-party he also accidentally slays Atys, the son of Crœsus. Having at first made his escape, he voluntarily surrenders himself, after seeking a

interview with Arienis, daughter of the Lydian monarch, to whom he was secretly betrothed. Thonis, wife of Atys, naturally urges his execution. Glaucus, the friend of Adrastus, had previously taken the responsibility of the deed on himself. Orœtes is an aged huntsman, tenderly attached to the slain Atys.)

CRŒSUS *on his Throne.* MELES, THONIS, NOBLES, OFFICERS, ATTENDANTS, &c. *Then enter* HUNTSMEN, *with the body of* ATYS, *covered with a mantle.* GLAUCUS, ORŒTES, MYSIANS. *Afterwards* ADRASTUS.

Crœsus. Back to my heart I'll chase each subject tear,
Scarf up emotion's pitying regard,
And then throne right-arm'd Terror on my brow,
Centering the horrid trouble of my brain
In one fierce focus of wide-wrinkled hate;
And from the burning hollows of these eyes,
Each a twin Cyclop in his deep-brow'd cave,
Hurl lightnings to consume the murderer —
Ay, like Jove!
Say! Do they come?
Attend. Great King, they are at hand!

Enter attendants with the body of ATYS, *&c.* CRŒSUS *nces to it, looks on his Son's corpse, and then*

Crœsus. There is a cloud between the earth and sun
That chills the blood of Crœsus.
O Atys!
Yon fearful outline of thy shrouded form
Huddled in dark unconsciousness of all
Thy father's agony,
Beggars the pomp with which mine eyes were fed
And strips me naked to the storms of Heaven,
Making my throne a proud deformity,
My sceptre worthless as a shrivell'd reed,
My crown a gift unto the shrinking head
Of the infected wretch that crawls about,
Making day hideous; and all my state
A palsied nothing!
And do ye call me monarch—king? Away!
Ye cringing slaves!
Bring not your damned, false faces here to mock
Crœsus with sympathy, or ye shall mourn
As he doth, whilst one desolation towers
Above the howling city; and I see
One vacant stare of childless parents round.
No! No! No!
Ye could not match your vulgar griefs with mine.

Attend. O king!
There stands he, who hath done this—

Crœsus. O! done what?
Stabb'd a fond mother, so her little ba'

Smiling, drew blood with milk, and laugh'd
to see it
Thus relish his own craving? Dull'd the eyes
Of lovers at their nuptials with foul juice
Of poison, and then held his sides to mark
The sweet effect of it—
Grimace of death to rapture quick succeeding?
No! He hath only stabb'd my son, my heart!
O murderer! where is he?

Attend. (points to Glaucus) There!

Enter ADRASTUS.

Adras. Here! It was I,
This fated hand did slay him—

Crœsus. How! What! Two?
Is not one plenty? Two to strike my son?
Two bloody revellers?
Hath crime like this a double? Hell-hounds,
speak!
Which did it?

Adras. 'Twas to shield me, that he said
The fearful curse was his. He was not present,
When it did happen—

Orœtes. Said I not 'twas so?

Crœsus. (to Adrastus). Stand thou in his
place!
He is free, there is
Nobility of daring in his deed,
And though the words he spake should seal his
doom,

Let him go hence.
But thou, wretch! monster! fiend!
Be my words fiery scorpions to thy heart—
Why hast thou done this? Could'st not rob me, say,
Of some great treasure to thy benefit?
Stealing my daughter, or the priceless gems,
Set in my diadem?
Thou cam'st here empty-handed, wert receiv'd
By Mercy drown'd in tears, kind Courtesy
That ne'er cried "'tis enough." Why did'st thou not
Like other suppliants fatten'd, drop away;
So that I might have smil'd at, and not curs'd
Thy fierce ingratitude, and look'd upon it
As a rare curious deformity,
Not to be gaz'd on twice? No! thy parch'd hand
Thirsted for blood alone, that blood so dear,
With drought as of the desert. But reproach
Befits not Crœsus. Answer thy black deed
Unto the kings of hell, where it was forg'd.
I will no more. Hence, to the torturers!
Adras. King! I would speak awhile; since I am come
A willing captive thus to meet thy look,
In that accusing presence shrouded there—
I would be heard. I wish not to deny
I am the most calamitous of men—
Therefore, would live not. But, the Gods,

Mysterious will'd his death—and, since I lov'd
Young Atys as my soul, forgive me, ere
I yield my life for his; then name my end—
I'll smile—

(Turns towards Glaucus.)

As now in greeting thee, my friend!
Why did'st thou peril thy rich life for mine?
If thou had'st died, I had gone mad and roam'd
The world, till grey slow age had stricken me,
Crying, *Out! out!* on Justice and the Heavens!

Orœtes. Let me bear witness with these agèd lips,
That shall be silent soon for ever, how
He sought to guard the prince from harm, before
This fated accident—

Crœsus. So far we pardon—
Untortur'd let him die, as he hath said.

(Enter a MESSENGER*).*

Mess. Great King! thy daughter's sick: she cannot come;
But she doth pray thee spare Adrastus' life.

Thonis. (to Crœsus). He kill'd thy son.

Glauc. The Gods did kill him, Crœsus!
If the black clouds stoop'd on thee, and in wrath
Their serpent lightnings hiss'd into thine eyes,
Would'st call thine executioner and bid
The storms of Heaven die?
His arm, who stands
Devoted yonder, was but the sad toy
Of incensèd Heavens—

Thonis. (pointing to the body). He lies there!
And there the man who stabb'd him breathes in life:
'Tis sweet to live. Justice and Death! I say.

Meles. (aside). He drank no wine, and yet I cannot think
But he is guiltless.

Adras. She hath spoken truth.
I am not fit to breathe—I will not live.
O, Crœsus! thou wert as a father, when
I sought thy royal presence. Thou gav'st me
Not bread alone, but smiles—receiving me
With love and hope, and wash'd me from my deed,
That hapless deed which sent me suppliant here,
And shelter'd me in thy most royal heart,
Which serpent-like I've stung. Now let me die!
Would I could give thee more than this poor breath!

Crœsus. Accurst thou camèst here—accurst, depart. [*To the Guard.*
Free him!

Thonis. Is then thy heart so cold, O king?
Colder than that pale corse that in his blood
Lies stricken there, thou freest his murderer thus?

Adras. I lov'd him well, who lies there: he forgave
The blow I struck; and if my cruel spear

Had pierc'd less deep, he would have liv'd to seek
Pardon for his lov'd enemy. 'Tis true
No tears do stain my cheeks; but, had he died
By other hand than mine, I would have wept
Longer than all these others. Oh! forgive me,
Ere yet I go: I will not bless thy name;
But from my heart in silence forth shall steal
A prayer for thee, that leaving me, shall grow
Into a voice and fill the earth, the skies
With Crœsus' love, and at the crystal gates
That ope on high the clouded battlements
Of Heaven itself speak out with clarion sound
The news of thy great justice.

Crœsus. Thou art forgiven.
Go!

Adras. I would have it thus. I thank thee for
The life thus given, and the sacred words
Pardoning the ruin of thy dearest joys.
Thy form dilated, a few moments since,
In anger; but thy spirit shrank within,
Hiding itself, that now expands to Heaven.
Thou grow'st sublime upon my aching sight!
Not sunshine, glittering on a prosperous throne—
Not whisper'd awe of hostile multitude
Wavelike far bowing 'neath stern victor's glance—
Not the death-radiance of a patriot's eyes
Upturn'd to the warm sky; whose broken sword
Outstretch'd still menaces, as he heeds not
The bristling death around him. Not all wealth

Wrought to the fancy of imperious man
To arm a host, or deck rich palaces—
Not Ocean in his madness, clouds in storm—
Or play of Spirits on the eternal sand
Heaving gigantic o'er the furnac'd plain—
Not booming cataract, whose silvery foam
Makes pale the mossy green, as it doth rise
Colour'd with glorious hues to the bright morn,
Transparent pall unto the constant death
Of fierce, resistless waters, gambolling—
Not aught that's terrible, or bright, or good—
O king! upon the wide face of the earth,
There is no grander sight,
Than injury like this forgiven.
Farewell, all!
And farewell, mighty king! now mightiest; since
Thou hast thyself thus conquer'd. But think not
Adrastus keeps the life he hath so begg'd
To call down fresh misfortune from the skies—
Monarch! I go to death.
Cræsus. No! Thou goest not.
Embrace me; I forgive thee. 'Twas no crime
Of thine, that he is dead whom we both lov'd—
Live! Thou shalt be my son.

DEATH OF ADRASTUS.

Before the tomb of ATYS. *A fountain playing in the distance.* ADRASTUS, *then* ARIENIS.

Adras. He said that I should live
his son—

O Crœsus! thinkest thou that I could live
To bring fresh sorrow to the hearts I love?—
Alas! thou knowest not Adrastus' soul,
That hath been link'd to sad calamity,
'Till he and it are one.
This is the spot!
Yon fountain nimbly plays,
Hymning with joyous, sparkling madrigals
Unto the stars; as if there were no Grief
Stalking the fever'd world.
As I came here;
Methought grim Atè, and the Furies sat
Group'd on the lofty house-tops motionless,
Brooding upon the sorrow at the hearths
Of those that wail within: dark towering Shapes,
Whose phantom outlines seem'd as wind-torn clouds,
Or drowsy, crop-full forms of birds obscene,
With out-stretch'd pinions, behind whom slow rises
A moaning hurricane—One giant arm,
Waving from out their spectre company,
Like the black shadow of a storm-sway'd branch,
Marshall'd me on!
O Atys! I am come
A willing sacrifice unto thy grave.
Yet once I hop'd to live—Alas! Love brought
Hope but a useless mourner to a tomb,
Where bending on her arm she may stay fixt,
Pointing to Heaven for the end alone
Of pale Adrastus' misery. [*Draws a dagger*

Thou sharp steel,
That smilest with cold glance, aid me to sleep;
That I may be at rest. Once I heard one
Say e'en the sleep of those, whose impure life
Doth riot in the streets, is often bright
With dreams of innocence. Oh! thus should Death,
The greatest sleep of all, seal up mine eyes
With luxury of calmness. Death pays all,
Where the heart never sinn'd; and perchance some
With beaming eyes will bless me that late gaz'd
With cruel, wolfish hunger on my life:
And stories shall be told of how I died,
Linking my name with honour at the end,
That was in life unfortunate indeed:
And some will scatter flowers on my tomb
That wither on such mission sent, ere yet
They reach the shrinking ground.
Thus be aveng'd
Thy son's life, Crœsus!

[*Enter Arienis.*]

Arien. Hold! hold! It is I.
What would'st thou with that dagger? Oh, I thought
Of this. I am in time to save thee.
Adras. No!
Arien. Give me the weapon.

Adras. Come here, let me drink
Once more the thrilling luxury of soul
To soul abandon'd from thine earnest eyes,
And then——

Arien. Thou wilt not die?

Adras. I must! I must!
I would not die; but did I live, new graves
Would open at each guilty step I took
Upon a lasting earthquake, and my friends,
With eyes that dragg'd mine from their deep-set caves,
Would sink around with mild, reproachful glances.
Tempt not Adrastus to such crime as this.
Gods! how I love thee, thus to linger here.
Oh, pardon me, ye slain ones!
I am a man—I'm not a marble form
Of Justice, with cold head and ne'er a heart.
I cannot do it, if she looks thus. Take
Thy passionate eyes away—thou kill'st the soul
Of honour in me with thy bribe of love—
Away! would'st thou betray me?

Arien. No! But live.
All wish it, and my Father looks to thee.
And I?—Hast thou not won this poor heart? No!
'Twas thine, ere thou did'st claim it, but thou said'st
That thou did'st love me. I know 'tis not much
a great soul like thine to be belov'd

Of any woman; yet think how I'll love,
And worship thee, and know no other gaze;
Hearing no other footstep than thine own;
Thine eager slave, thy smiling minister:
Oh! leave me not alone—Alone! it is
A hollow, frightful word. Thou shalt not die,
Alone, if thou wilt die; yet, live for Arienis.

Adras. I would not change this agony of love
To be unknown to Sorrow:—but 'tis vain.
There is a gulf between us living, which
I will o'er-leap to hover round thee. Say,
Thou'lt sometimes weep for me and think me near,
My soul dissolv'd in sunshine on thy path;
And, when thou hearest music, sighing in
Each softest, lingering fall; Oh, speak, my love!

Arien. I am but a weak girl, not eloquent,
Or I would bid thee live in such a strain,
That woods and waters and the deep blue skies
Should fade to hear it—Live! oh, only live,
And we will mourn together and build tombs,
Water'd with pious tears, unto the slain.
See! on my knees I pray. That steel doth pierce
My poor brain. Sheathe it, or strike here! I'll die,
As well, as thou can'st.

Adras. How I tr
Spirit of Justice, thron'd upon the base

Of the firm-balanc'd universe, whose breath
Doth animate the being passionless
Of Him, who places us for trial here,
That we may merit a more glorious state
In the bright chambers of the dazzling sun,
Where, methinks, Spirits dwell, O, aid me! nerve
My conscious heart unto thy bidding pure.
Now the full tide of noble thought doth rush
Back to my faltering soul:
Now, as I look up to yon halcyon deep
Of the far waveless ocean, swimming blue
High o'er all mortal heads,
Whose flashing jewels glitter fast above
Set in Time's thought-seen diadem,
My aching soul doth thirst to disappear,
Lapp'd in the distant softness to dim rest,
Earth, sorrow, passion, all save one sweet dream
Banish'd, forgotten ever.

(Places ARIENIS *gently on the ground, after embracing her.)*

She sleeps now.
This is the moment. What are yon lights? Hark!
They come to seek her. It is well. Now!
[*Stabs himself on the tomb.*
Brother!
Atys! I see your smiling faces near—

The star grows brighter, love, where we shall
meet.
It is not death that steals me thus away.
Hark! whence those pearly sounds? My bride,
my love,
Come here to life. Adrastus calls thee, come!
[*Dies.*

THE STRICKEN HEART.

Since her brother's death she hath scarce
spoken
To any of us. Sometimes a great sigh
Would leave her lips apart, and she would look
Startled around on each of us; like one
That sought her pardon with imploring eyes,
From sternest judges; then a sickly smile,
A human twilight, something less than gloom,
Would play around the corners of her mouth;
And then she would fall back, as if there were
No joy, hope, wish, change—nought save blank
despair.

ARIENIS DISCOVERS THE DEATH OF ADRASTUS.

ARIENIS, LYDIS, LYDIAN GIRLS.

Arien. Thou shalt not!—Hide that gleaming horror there.
My father had a dream! Why, that is well—
Smother it in thy mantle, thus—Again!
With trembling eagerness it thirsts for blood.
Hide it, my love.
I cannot look upon it. Mine eyes ache.
Thou dost not press me to thine arms, Adrastus,
Where art thou?
Who are ye, with frighten'd looks?
He shall not do it! Let me go—methought
Just now his voice did call me to the Tomb,
Less sad than 'twas before, to pray with him.
[*Rushes to the Tomb.*
What is that heap'd and ghastly form? Whose blood
Bubbles to my numb feet? I dream not, see!
It is Adrastus, dead. He would not live—
We should have died together; now I wait
A brief, sad hour.
[*To the Lydian girls surrounding her.*
Why hold the garlands, till
They grow to your wan fingers? Strew around!
Ye have more need now. Strew around, I say!
[*Falls into the arms of Lydis.*

Lydia. Bear her up gently; aid me, she doth faint.
Bring her unto the palace. It is well,
That Crœsus know not this fresh woe to-night.

HUMILIATION OF CRŒSUS.

Crœsus. 'Tis enough!
The wrath of Heaven, present, bends me low:
Till my white hairs, escap'd from kingly crown,
Do grovel in the dust. O Pride! O Pomp!
Why are your silver voices dumb, that late
Did sooth my jealous ear? but in your place
Steals a small cry from lowly roof, and chills
My conscience, telling me that all is just.
Rich, I forgot the poor—proud, thought the Gods
My equals: grac'd with fortune, power, more
Than ever other mortal blest, I dreamt
It did become me. Selfish, opulent,
I gave not—Solon! Solon! Thou wert wise—
Saying, with accents calm, that greatness might
Desert the side of Crœsus, leaving him
To link his arm with sorrow, pace by pace
Guiding his faltering footsteps to the tomb,
He had forgotten.
Let all Sardis mourn,
That lov'd *him* well, the treble death that numbs

With stern reality my faded brow. Give alms,
That they may bless him dead and pray for me
Unwilling living. Hang out sable dumb
From darken'd windows. To my people sad
Proclaim two years of mourning. They will find
Fresh joys their young hope wither'd; I alone
Must joyless weep for ever, hope no more—
Chamber'd with Grief, Death waiting at the door.

FROM

The Drama of "Cromwell," published in 1846.

NIGHT.

O, sweet hour!
In yonder heaven deep the stars are lit
For evening service of seraphic quires—
Eternal pomp of serried, blazing worlds,
The heraldry of God, ere yet Time was.
The moon hangs low, her golden orb impearl'd
In a sweet iris of delicious light,
That leaves the eye in doubt, as swelling die
Round trills of music on the raptur'd ear,
Where it doth fade in blue, or softly quicken.
How, through each glade, her soft and hallowing ray
Stole like a maiden tiptoe o'er the ground,

Till every tiny blade of glittering grass
Was doubled by its shadow.
Can it be,
That evil hearts throb near a scene like this?

DESCRIPTION OF MODERN ROME.

'Tis the decay of a once splendid harlot,
Painting her ruin, that the enthusiast eye
Lives on the recollection still, and thus
The alms of passers by still meet her cravings:
She stands, her scarr'd proud features mock'd
with rags,
Fixt at the end of a great thoroughfare;
With shrill gesticulation, fawning ways,
Clinging unto the traveller to sustain
Her living foul decay, and death in life—
She is the ghoul of cities; for she feeds
Upon the corpse of her own buried greatness.

FRIENDSHIP WITH MILTON.

I in Italy did know
That excellent man. Full often we have sat
Upon the white and slippery marble limb
Of some great ruin'd temple, whilst all round
Was dipp'd in the warm, lustrous atmosphere

We know not here, and purple eve did glow
With shadows soft as beds of fallen roses;
And he hath spoken in clear tones until
He built up all again, and glory's home
Grew glorious as ever. Then his voice
Would sudden deepen into holy thought
And mournful sweet philosophy, 'till all
The air grew musical and my soul good.
How well do I remember of those times.

A CROMWELL FOR A RUPERT.

I thought the day was ours. The headlong Rupert
Swept all before him, like the wind that bends
The thin and unkind corn; his men were numb
With slaying, and their chargers straddling, blown
With undue speed, as they had hunted that
Which could not turn again—e'en thus was Rupert:
When round to meet his squadrons came a host
Like whirlwind to the wind.
There was a moment that the blood-surge roll'd
Hither and thither, while you saw in the air
Ten thousand bright blades, and as many eyes
Of flame flash'd terribly. Then Rupert stay'd
His hot hand in amazement,

And all his blood-stain'd chivalry grew pale:
The hunters, chang'd to quarry, fled amain—
I saw the prince's jet-black, favourite barb
Thrown on her haunches; then away, away,
Her speed did bear him safe—Next came there one,
A grisly man, with head all bare and grey,
That shouted—*Smite and scatter, spare not, ho!*
Ye chosen of the Lord! and they did smite,
As on the anvil; till the plumèd helms
Of all our best bent down.

CHARACTER OF CROMWELL.

MILTON—ARTHUR.

Mil. Thou hast fought well, I have heard it—
Arth. From Cromwell?
Mil. Yes, from him—
Arth. It is of him
That I would speak, as well as of this cause
That we call Freedom.
I have doubts of all
That urge this cruel war—Where is the end?
I fight against a tyrant, not a king,
To set a tyrant up, or what is worse,
A hundred tyrants. Think you it may be
A struggle for the power they feign to hate?

Mil. What have you seen to make you think so?

Arth. Much!
The spirit of a demon host that strives
Each for himself against the common good,
Rather than that true patriot zeal of Rome
We us'd to read of—hatred, jealousy,
With the black ferment of the hungry mob
To gain by loss of others; and the aim
Of one man, more than all, seems set upon
An elevation high, as Hell is deep;
For such, if gain'd, the fit comparison.

Mil. The common error of a generous mind,
To do no good, and shrink within itself,
Sick of the jostling of the wolfish throng.
Your cause is just; though devils fight for it,
Heaven with its sworded angels doth enlist them:
So works a wise and wondrous Providence.

Arth. Tell me, what think you then of Cromwell? Is he
Ambitious, cruel, eager, cunning, false,
Slave to himself and master sole of others?
Is his religion but as puppet-wires,
To set a hideous idol up of self,
Like some fierce God of Ind? Or is he but
A fiery pillar leading the sure way—
Arriv'd, content to die by his own light,
As others lived upon his burning truth,
And struggled to him from surrounding darkness?

Mil. There is much good in him, yet not all good;
And yet believe the cause he seeks divine.
Listen! this is the worst 'twere possible
To speak of him. He is a man,
Whom Heaven hath chosen for an instrument,
Yet not so sanctified to such high use,
That all the evil factions of the heart,
Ambition, worldly pride, suspicion, wrath,
Are dead within him—and thus, mark you how
Wisdom doth shine in this, more than if pure,
With unavailing excellent tears and woe,
He pray'd afar in dim and grottoed haunt
To quench the kingdom's foul iniquities—
An interceding angel hath not done it
So well as this fierce superstitious man.

Arth. But if the king be prisoner and were slain?

Mil. I trust not that; yet kings are not divine—

Arth. Nor churches, temples, still ye would not rend
The altar vow'd to Heaven.

Mil. No, but purge
The living fire upon it, when the flame
Is brutish and discolour'd.—When kings fail,
We'll bastardize each craven to his breed,
And hurl the recreant down!

Arth. But not destroy—

Mil. 'Twould heal the sight of millions yet unborn.

Arth. In this I am not with you; yet I grant
So far 'tis well. I trust a different end.
The king, that hath much noble feeling in him,
Will yield; and then we will give back again
His just prerogative—

Mil. It may be so.
Where is the high-soul'd Strafford?—The same weakness
That yielded there is obstinacy now,
To the last drop of the pride-tainted blood
That through the melancholy Stuart's veins
Doth creep and curdle—

Arth. You do make me sad—

Mil. Nay, there is sadness in the noble task
Appointed us. An hour past came Cromwell here
As full of sorrow for the king, as thou—
Hating the sour and surly Presbyter
And bitter wrath of the fierce Parliament:
He parted from me in an angry mood,
Because I coldly met his warm desire
That Charles might reign again—

Arth. Indeed! Is't so?

AN ACCUSATION AND A COMPARISON.

O, it was base, degrading and unhappy,
To make God's different worship, damning means

Of an unholy war between his people;
To be the beggar of his people's blood,
To set that crown upon his false, weak brow,
His pale, insolvent, most dishonour'd brow,
From which, too wide, it slipp'd into the mire,
To fit him ne'er again.—
Ay, base indeed,
To use such means to gain such selfish end!
So I have heard,
There have been men, in such a hapless clime,
As this poor Ireland; unctuous, wordy men,
With slug-like skins, and smiling, cheerful faces,
That, with their pamper'd families grew fat,
By bleeding Famine's well-nigh bloodless frame;
Lessening the pauper's bitter, scanty bread,
Season'd with salt tears; shredding finer still
The blanket huddled to the stone-cold heart
Of the wild, bigot, ghastly, dying wretch—
Thus, for a devilish and unnatural gain,
Mowing the lean grass of a Golgotha!
Sitting, like grinning Death, to clutch the toll
Tortur'd from poverty, disease and crime;
And this with Liberty upon their lips,
Bland words, and specious, vulgar eloquence,
And large oaths, with the tongue thrust in the cheek,
And promises, as if they were as gods,
And no God held the forked bolt above!
Turning all ignorance, disaffection, hate,
Religion, and the peasant's moody want,

To glut themselves with hard-wrung copper coins,
Verjuic'd with hot tears, thin and watery blood;
Brazening the conscious lie unto the world
That it was done for hallowing Freedom's sake,
Until the names of *Freedom*, *Patriot*, stank,
Blown on and poison'd by these beggar lips;
That men had need to coin fresh words to mean
The holy things with stale use so defil'd.

INDECISION OF REVOLUTIONISTS.

Crom. I am mute to think
Of what ye all say—words—ye dare not do it—
I say ye dare not, though ye were to die
Not doing, what your gross and eager speech
Makes easier than to cough, or spit, or cry
God save the King;—but ere your thought hath fled
A rood, a yard into the empty air,
Dissolv'd is your high counsel, and Dismay
Whips all the noble blood that fir'd your cheeks
To the pale mantle of a creamy fear—
Fie! fie! ye dare not do it—nay, son Ireton!
What, Harrison so boisterous? keep your frowns
To look upon his trial, since 'tis so—
[*Pointing to* IRETON.

Now hath he not a traitorous brow like his,
Perchance, that did stab Cæsar? those were days
When men did e'en as much as they dar'd hint at.

DESCRIPTION OF CROMWELL AT THE EXECUTION OF THE KING.

Ere all was ready, while 'mid wolfish noise
The patient pale king lipp'd the deafen'd air,
O'er Cromwell's face approaching doom grew large
In stony horror. Then 'twas calm and still.
Destruction's god, from his broad, wizard throne,
Might on the front of coming whirlwinds, as
They near'd his footstool, look unchang'd as he:
Sphinx-like!
But, when the deed was done,
The flash that left the swift-descending axe
In triumph fiercely shot into his eyes,
A moment welling quick successive fires,
Like sudden birth of stars 'tween wintry clouds:
Then came a look of doubt and wonderment,
As if it were a thing he knew not of,
And shudder'd at, amaz'd that it was so:
His hollow eye wan'd like the moon's eclipse;
And then he clutch'd his sword, and strove to read

Men's faces near him; and then furious leapt
On his black war-horse, standing saddled by,
And unattended, save by that red scene,
Like an arm'd pestilence, rode swift—away!

THE SOLILOQUY OF CROMWELL BEFORE WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Enter CROMWELL, *cloaked.*

Crom. This night the place looks older than it is,
As if some future centuries had pass'd,
Leaving their shadows on it—
Yon tall towers,
That pierce the unsettled sky,
Seem not to point unto the stars that watch
My coming greatness; but with solemn air
To frown back on the memory of Cromwell—
Yon dark cathedral, whose sharp turret spires
Look like funereal firs on Ararat,
When the sun setting stream'd in blood upon
The fast decaying waters—that huge pile
Of gloomy worship to the God of ages—
Feels like this age's tomb and monument:
Would I were buried in it, so I might
there—for O, I cannot sleep to-night.

My molten blood runs singing through my veins—
It is no wonder: I have known less things
Disturb my rest; beside, there is a thought
Hath led me forth—Come, let me deal with it.
'Tis midnight! Now to face him were a deed,
To feel that one had done it—not to tell:
To fold the arms and look upon the work
That I have wrought with stedfast, iron will—
There's evil fascination in the thought,
Grows to desire—
I cannot stay my feet!
Like one in dreams, or hurried by a storm,
That hales him on with wild uncertain steps,
I move on to the thing I dread.
[*Sighs deeply.*
Methought
A voice stole on mine ears—as if a sword
[*Sighs again.*
Clove the oppressive air. Why do I shrink?
On Naseby field my bare head tower'd high;
And now I bend me, though my tingling ears
Unconscious but drink in the deep-drawn sigh,
That doth attend on greatness.
This is folly.
O coward fancy, lie still in thy grave!
A king doth keep his coffin, why not thou?
I'll meet him like a conqueror, whose cheek
Flushes with manly pity. Could it be,
That he had liv'd without his country's shame—

But no! and thus, I come, Charles Stuart! to tell
Thy bloodless clay, that I repent me *not*.
No! if a holocaust of kings were slain,
I'd own the deed unto their legion'd spirits.
[*Exit.*

CROMWELL VISITS THE DEAD BODY OF CHARLES I.

A State Room in Whitehall. The moon shines through the windows.

On a large bed with crimson hangings, surmounted with black plumes, is seen a Coffin and pall, richly emblazoned with the royal arms of England. On each side an Ironside keeping guard with a matchlock. They walk to and fro, and speak as they meet.

1*st Iron.* I tell thee, Bowtell, I would this watch were over.

2nd Iron. I would it were a bright morning, with our pike-heads glittering in the sun. I would rather it were a charge of Rupert's best cavalry in our rear.

1*st Iron.* I mind when I once saw him alive: 'twas at the close of the fight, and he would have charged once more, but a false Scotch noble held him back to his ruin. Had I been he, I would have cloven the false Scot to the chine.

I was a prisoner, and near him: he had a tall white plume then. His dark face showed very eager beneath it.

2nd Iron. Ay, I have heard good Jepherson tell of it, and how the Lord blinded them all.

1st Iron. I mind his very words—

Charles Stuart begs a little loyal blood
To do him right—a charge, but one more charge!
Come on, we do command, come on!
O cowards!
Had I but fifty of my nephew, Rupert!

and then he waved his sword, as 'twere the whole cut and thrust exercise in the air at once, and his plume fluttered like a white bird in the eye of a tempest. If he should speak now——

[*A footstep is heard, both look round.*]

2nd Iron. Did'st thou hear nought?

1st Iron. O, for a stoup of strong waters?

2nd Iron. Hist! 'twas like a soldier's tread, in the long gallery beyond.

1st Iron. Nay, 'tis the echo of thine own.

2nd Iron. 'Tis a footstep. Hark, it stops!

1st Iron. Do thou speak.

Enter CROMWELL.

[*They bring their matchlocks to bear.*] The word—or else we fire!

Crom. [*Muttering.*] *Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?*

2nd Iron. Hold! 'Tis the General.
Crom. Ha! how fare you?

[*The soldiers move towards the door, coming from the coffin.*]

Stay, Bowtell!
Open me yonder coffin—do'st not hear?
Quick, fool! Thy mouth is all agape, as if
Thou did'st lack tidings. What do'st quiver for?
Give me thy sword. [*Wrenches open the coffin.*
I would see how he looks:
Perchance I may undo the look he sent
In search of me this morn from off the scaffold.
Bow. My Lord!
Shall we go?
Crom. Ay, I would lift my voice
In prayer awhile. Nay, leave your matchlocks.
So— [*Exit Ironsides.*

[*The steps of the Ironsides are heard gradually retreating—Cromwell follows them to the side.*]

It is an hour since I did speak to them.
The air is life-like and intelligent:
I seem to fret it as I move along;
Yet this is Death's abode.
[*Looks cautiously round.*
[*Calls in another tone.*] Ho, there! Hola!
We are alone. I do forget me—stay—
[*Advances to the coffin.*]

Like the hot iron to the quivering flesh
Be this test to my soul, to look on him—
To set my living face by his dead face;
Then tax him with the deeds for which I slew him.

[*Opens the coffin very gently.*

O thou discrownèd and insensible clay!
Thou beggar corpse!
Stripp'd, 'midst a butcher'd score, or so, of men,
Upon a bleak hill-side, beneath the rack
Of flying clouds torn by the cannon's boom,
If the red, trampled grass were all thy shroud,
The scowl of Heaven thy plumèd canopy,
Thou might'st be any one!
How is it with thee? Man! Charles Stuart! King!
See, the white, heavy, overhanging lids
Press on his grey eyes, set in gory death;
How blanch'd his dusky cheek, that late was flush'd
Because a people would not be his slaves,
And now a worm may mock him—
This strong frame
Promis'd long life, 'tis constituted well:
'Twas but a lying promise, like the rest:
Dark is the world of tyranny within
Yon roofless house, where Silence holds her court
Before Decay's last revel.

Yet, O King,
I would insult thee not. But if thy spirit
Circle unseen around the guilty clay,
Till it be buried, and those solemn words
Give *dust to dust*, leaving the soul no home
On this vain earth,
O, hear me!
Or if still
There be a something sentient in the body,
Through all corruption's stages, till our frames
Rot, rot, and seem no more—and thus the soul
Is cag'd in bones through which the north wind rattles,
Or haunts the black skull wash'd up by the waves
Upon the moaning shore; poor weeping skull,
From whose deep-blotted, eyeless socket holes
The dank green seaweed drips its briny tear—
If it be so, that round the festering grave,
Where yet some earth-brown, human relic moulders,
The parting ghost may linger to the last,
Till it have share in all the elements,
Shriek in the storm, or glide in summer air—
O, hear me!
Or, if thou hast stood already,
Shrivell'd, but for His mercy, into nought,
Before the blaze of Heaven's offended eye,
And hast receiv'd thy sentence, hear me, thence!

There is none with us now.
Thus then I lay my hand upon thy breast,
And while my heart is nearly still as thine,
Swear that I slew thee but to stop thy crimes;
(O, soul of Charles, wilt thou not plead for Cromwell?)
Swear that I would my head were low as thine,
Could'st thou have liv'd belov'd, and loving England:
For I have done a deed in slaying thee
Shall wring the world's heart with its memory;
Men shall believe me not, as they are base;
Fools shall cry "hypocrite," as they dare judge
The naked fervour of my struggling soul.
God judge between us!—I am arm'd in this,
Could'st thou have reign'd, not crushing English hearts
With fierce compression of thine iron sway,
Cromwell had liv'd contented and unknown
To teach his children loyalty and faith
Sacred and simple as the grass-grown mound,
That should have press'd more lightly on his bones
Than ever greatness on his wearied spirit.

(Re-enter the Ironsides. They ground their matchlocks.)

(CROMWELL, *starting*)

Another blow? No! no! there was b··
He suffer'd nothing.

Bowt. Worthy General,
We are return'd,
Crom. [*Replacing his Cloak after covering the Coffin, as before.*] Ha! have ye drunk well, fellows?
I knew not that ye had such cold work here.
[*Gives them Money.*
Now, on your lives, no word of this.
Bowt. May't please you,
What form of Government shall we have now?
Crom. It does not please me, knave! to stand here prating;
Ask *him* trick'd out in yonder empty state,
Who shall succeed him. [*Points to the Coffin.*
Surely, I know nought,
That am the meanest servant of the Lord
To do his work alone. See ye to yours. [*Exit.*

[*The Sentinels resume their walk. The Clock strikes One: as it strikes the Guard is heard approaching, and whilst it is relieving them, the Scene closes.*

CROMWELL'S DOUBTS.

Enter CROMWELL *alone.*

Crom. How well he died, that liv'd not well
–his words
ıld here. Kings have died ere now,
ıse lives

Were needless, hurtful to their people's good;
But none so meek as this. O Cromwell! Cromwell!
Hast thou done well? O could an angel light
The deepest corner of thy secret mind,
And tell thee thou'rt not damn'd to hell for this,
The avenging act of horror—or that, inspir'd,
Thou wert the minister of Heaven's decree,
And that ambition drugg'd not thy design
With soul-consuming poison! I, this I,
Have done it—for what?—Which is't? To live and reign?
Or crown the smiling land with good? Well, both.
If I have sinn'd, it was at least for all.
The puny stripling calls not his love, lust:
The passions that we have in us may blend
With noble purpose and with high design;
Else men who saw the world had gone astray
Would only wish it better; and lie down,
In vain regret to perish.—
How his head
Roll'd on the platform with deep, hollow sound!
Methinks I hear it now, and through my brain
It vibrates like the storm's accusing knell,
Making the guilty quake. I am not guilty!
It was the nation's voice, the headsman's axe.
Why drums it then within my throbbing ears?—
I slew him not!
Ho, there! [*Enter a Servant*

Ask quickly, how
My daughter fares, if she be better—

[*Exit Servant.*

Lo!
If I should lose her. Nay! it cannot be.
My thoughts seem driven like the wind-vex'd leaves
That eddy round in vain: fy, fy upon me!
Was not Saul doom'd? but David slew him not;
Yet Heaven led him through the winding cave,
Sealing the watcher's lids, and to his hand
Gave the bright two-edg'd blade, that in his eyes
Look'd with cold meaning; bloodless it remain'd—
Would it were so now!

HIS MELANCHOLY.

CROMWELL AND PEARSON.

Cromwell. Come hither, Pearson,
Thou know'st me well. Speak, wherefore doubting thus
I feel my soul aghast at its own being?
[illegible]thought just now all Hell did cry aloud,

Conscience can give no peace — the liar Conscience,
That knows not what she prates.—Out, out on Conscience!
She that did whisper peace unto my soul,
But now, before the fearful shadow came,
That since my boyhood often visits me,
And with dark musings fills my brain perturb'd;
Making the current of my life-blood stagnate;
My heart the semblance of a muffled bell,
Within my ribs, its tomb; my flesh creep like
The prickly writhings of a new-slough'd snake;
Each several moment as the awaken'd glare
Of the doom'd felon starting from his sleep;
While the slow, hideous meaning of his cell
Grows on him like an incubus, until
The truth shoots like an ice-bolt to his brain
From his dull eyeball; then, from brain to heart
Flashes in sickening tumult of despair—
As in this bosom.

Pear. 'Tis black Melancholy.
I've read of such, my Lord; it hath no part
With what men think, or do;—'tis physical:
A holy preacher feels the self-same thing,
That ne'er outstepp'd his sacred village round;
'Tis often nurs'd of this damp, noxious climate:
Most excellent men have suffer'd it—
Thou k[illegible]
I have seen bloody deeds beneath the sui
Upon the Spanish main, when I was you

Crom. What of them, say ?—I thought thou loved'st not
To speak thyself a pirate.
Pear. 'Twas, my Lord,
Ere I knew grace, or my most honoured master.
Crom. I trust thou art forgiven.
Pear. I'd not speak
Of deed of mine, my Lord. I did but think
That in the sunlit tropic I had known
The wantonness of cruelty: and seen
Aged men grown grey in crime, whose hair thus blanch'd
Show'd white, like sugar by hot blood refin'd.
Crom. What of this?—Tell me what thou knew'st of them.
Pear. I never knew desponding doubt or fear
Curdle the healthy current of their veins;
They never shudder'd at a blood-red kerchief;
But on their shining knife-blades, as they smok'd
On deck through the long summer noon, would show
The dents and notches to their younger fellows;
As thus—*This cut a Spanish merchant's throat,*
With wealthy ingots laden; this the rib-bone
Of his lean Rib, that clutch'd an emerald brooch
Too eagerly, hath rasp'd—and here d'ye see a chip?
'id the reckoning of a skin-flint purser.

Crom. What meanest thou by this?—
Pear. I mean, my Lord,
The frequent gloom that clouds thy noble spirit,
Is born of humours natural to thy body:
And as foul vapours blur the honest sun,
Hangs o'er the face of the high enterprise,
That hath enrich'd thy name, not harm'd thy soul.

THE SPECTRE OF LIFE.

Think'st thou 'twere sad to mark the anguish'd
That sudden on the harlot's painted features,
Set in the stale attraction of forc'd smiles,
Darkens so wildly—wildly, that amaz'd
From the crack'd glass she staggers, to her brow
Lifts her wan, jewell'd finger, tries to think—
The wanton provocation of her features
Chang'd all to sickly twilight, blank dismay—
And when thought comes, to see the poor wretch quiver,
Her eyes' fire turn'd to water—those blue eyes,
Where once sweet fancies woven danc'd in light;
To see the Present, Future, Past, appal her;
The Spectre of her grown up life arise
Ever between her childhood's innocent dawn,
And the lost thing, herself; to see her choke

Upon her scanty food; to see Despair
Clutch her polluted bosom; see her teeth,
Pearls that have outliv'd their neglected home,
Shine whiter in that ruin?—
'Twere a sight
To bid the palsied heart of Lewdness grieve,
Youth grow a hermit, Age old vices leave!

CROMWELL SPEAKING OF AMERICA.

Ere Hampden's death had seal'd the bond of strife,
Thou knowest not, how oft to quit these shores
With angel fervour she entreated me,
And girt by true hearts, all my soul held dear,
To seek a home in that far western clime—
"Nay, start not at the name—America!"
Where boundless forests whisper Liberty
With all their million-musick'd leaves, and blue lakes
Murmur it, and great cataracts, that light
With flash of whirling foam the tempest's scowl,
To souls untam'd as they, roar Freedom!
[*Crosses the Stage*
Ay!
Thus to escape remorse—
Leaving this work to God and to His will,
I perchance too rashly made mine own,

And noble hearts had follow'd, and I had sav'd
Her, so soon lost for ever! Is not this
A thought had madden'd Brutus, though all Rome
Did hail him saviour, while the Capitol
Rock'd, like a soul-stirr'd Titan, to its base
With their free acclamation?—

HIS INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE OPPRESSED.

CROMWELL—MILTON—AN OFFICER.

Off. Sir, the Waldenses, frightfully oppress'd
By the curst fury of insatiate Rome,
Pray you for succour, lest their people perish—
A merchant-captain bore these instant letters.
[*Exit Off.*

Crom. (to Milton). What answer, think you, shall I give to them?

Mil. O, quick remonstrate with these bloody men;
Say, how this England looks with sorrowing eyes
On the injustice she herself might share,
But for the check God gives her enemies.

Crom. Ay, with the thunder of the cannon's voice
I will remonstrate! What! will greed

Sheathe her fierce talons, mov'd by frigid words,
And tame remonstrance? Rather supplicate
The ravening tiger, or the venom'd snake
Forbearance of his prey. I tell thee, Milton,
The force of words alone would upward fly,
E'en with the prayer of these sad innocents;
But leave them still to perish. I'll not sleep
Till I have sent them aid, or lose one hour
Till right be done. For so shall stand or fall
England hereafter!

Mil. Were it wise, my Lord,
This little isle should brave all Europe's wrath?

Crom. Ay, all the world's! 'Twere wiser, than to see
Weak nations fall whose sole offence it is
To think like us. I care not who they be.
Let race and language differ, kindred thoughts
Should make all kin that bow the knee to God.
This island should be fortress of the world
To keep that precious jewel of mankind,
Freedom to think and speak, in trust for all;
Great deeds will follow where free thought may live;
But, lest thought perish, deeds their aid must give.
Prepare the letters.

Mil. Might it not be well
To temporize, ere brave such mighty foe?

Crom. No. He who grasps the nettle should be rash

And sudden. With each persecuted soul,
Whose eyes in yonder vales are glaz'd in death,
There dies a principle, that should be dear
To England as herself. A single blow
Struck on behalf of these for conscience' sake
Were better for our interest, than spoil
Of an idolatrous hemisphere. Go tell
The triple tyrant England's sword is drawn,
The scabbard flung behind: till these have peace
I'll hear no reasoning. What is just is wise—
Their God is our God, and they shall not perish!

Mil. (aside). I did but tempt him to this great resolve:
Now shall the slaughter'd saints be soon aveng'd,

THE DEATH OF ELIZABETH CLAYPOLE.

Drawing-room at Whitehall. A Nurse in attendance. The Lady ELIZABETH *is lying on a Couch, surrounded by the Family of* CROMWELL. *Her Sisters are kneeling around her.*

Eliz. Leave me awhile; I shall be better soon:
I would but see my father; pray you seek him:
I wish to speak with him.

Lady Crom. Nay, my sweet child,
You must not be alone.
Eliz. Dear mother, pardon,
I shall be better.
Nurse. The physician said
She must not be denied the thing she asks.
Lady Crom. Well, then—but let me cover thee, my sweet,
The night is cold.
Eliz. No! no! I scarce can breathe.
Lady Crom. Indeed she mends, her eyes are brighter. Come.
[*They rise, and go out quietly.*
Eliz. [*Raising herself*] Unbare my beating bosom to the wind,
And let the breath of Heaven wander through
The dreary twilight of my tangled hair.
Mine eyes shall never sparkle any more,
Save with the fearful glitter of unrest;
My cheeks flush not with any hope on earth,
But with the live glow in their ash burn on:
Death holds his Carnival of winter roses
Till their last blossom drops within the grave.
Hush! what was that? I thought I heard a noise:
He comes, my father comes! Away all thought
Of self—Away, base passion, that would bind
My wingèd soul to earth,—hush! hush! he comes. [*Pause.*

'Twas but the night-wind's flagging breath! No sound
Of mortal footstep, as it hither crept
Tiptoe and carefully, 'twas like a murderer,
That in his sleep walks forth. See, how he threads his way
'Mid all the antique chattels of the room,
Where it was done! Mark, how his careful feet
Avoid yon blood-stains, though they shrink not when
The grey rat courses o'er them. Nay, 'tis gone.
A shape of fancy's painting to the sight.
'Twas but the wind, I said—whose fleeting voice
The vaulted corridor did syllable aloud,
Mingling my name with tombs.
Again, I hear,
It is his heavy footstep—

Enter CROMWELL.

Father! here
Come close and press me warmly to thee. Quick!
Lest Death step in between us—
Reach me here
That cup. My voice fails—not that hand! 'tis blood,
[*He lets fall the cup.*
As in my dreams. I would assoil him. Father!
'Tis said, upon the giddy verge of life
The eye grows steady, and the soul sees clear

Thought guiding action in all human things.
Not in the busy, whirling masque of life,
Reality unreal, but in truth.
Then the eye cuts as the chirurgeon's knife
Mocks the poor corpse. I saw not when *he* died:
Yet last night was a scaffold, there! all black,
And one stood visor'd by, with glittering axe
Who struck the bare neck of a kneeling form—
Methought the head of him that seem'd to die,
With ghastly face and painful, patient stare,
Glided along the sable, blood-gilt floor,
As unseen fiends did pull it by its mass
Of dank and dabbled hair, and when I turn'd
Mine eyes to see it not, the headsman's mask
Had fallen to the ground—
Thou didst not do it?
For it was *thy* face. Father, answer me! [*She implores in a very earnest attitude, and gradually falls back.*]

Crom. [*Stands amazed at his daughter's action*]
I'll hear no more. 'Twas not my daughter spoke—
She's dead, and Heaven reproves me with a voice
From yon pale tenement of clay. My hair's on end.
She said that fiends dragg'd his; 'tis mine they tug.
Avaunt! I meant well.
[*Shouts are heard without.*

Hark I hear without
A Babel of hoarse demons clamouring loud
For Cromwell, the Protector!

[*His daughter points upwards.*

No not there.
I cannot follow thee. A Spirit stands,
Anointed, in the breach of Heaven's walls,
Behind him streams intolerable light,
His floating locks are crown'd—his look repels—
I was his murderer on earth—his gaze
Speaks pity; but not pardon—Let me rise!
There's mercy on his brow—I fall, I fall!
I tell ye loose me, ere I see him not:
His form recedes, clouds hide him from my sight:
A hand of midnight grasps me by the throat—
They call'd me Cromwell when I lived on earth,
And said I slew a king. There is no air—

[*He sinks exhausted on a chair.*

Enter PEARSON.

Eliz. [*To* PEARSON.]
Pearson, thou lov'st him?
Pear. Madam, with a love
Born of those moments when men's lives are cheap

[*Looks at* CROMWELL.

The dark fit is upon him. I have found
'Tis best to leave him to himself:—

Eliz. No! no!
There is no time. My breath is short. O Pearson,
Rouse him from that cold torpor, ere I die.
Life will not turn my hour-glass any more,
Whose thin sands, sinking at the centre fast,
Ebb hollowly away. I would but speak
A few soft words of comfort, pray him to
Repent—there is repentance; for his heart
Sinn'd not so deeply as the world may think.

Crom. [*Raising himself.*] Who said repentance? What's done, is done well.
I stand acquitted. Daughter, cheer thee, rise.
Thou shalt recover, my sweet darling. List!
It was the Lord reveal'd it to me.

Eliz. Cease!
Father, blaspheme no longer; with such words
Feed the wild fever of the enthusiast crew,
Pander to hypocrites; but not here, now,
Deceive thyself or me—

[*During this Pearson has slowly withdrawn.*

Crom. This is not well;
As the Lord liveth, those poor lips, my child,
Speak foolishness. Who taught thee to rebuke
Thy father? Know, he stands 'twixt thee and God,
Not thou between the living God and him.

Eliz. What was that agony that tore thee now?—

Why did'st thou swoon and talk of murder'd kings,
Of hell and sulphur and the mocking fiends?

Crom. Must thou now learn that when my soul is dark
With sorrow, agitation, melancholy,
I am possess'd with black delirous fits?—
'Twas so ere thou wert born, ere I was call'd
Unto a burden heavier, than man,
Unsuffering may bear; but, daughter, listen!
I am not guilty, if the human mind
May keep account with its own issuings forth
To act and do; if thought deceive us not,
And reason live in man. I am not guilty, if
The blind chimera of an earth-crown'd king
Be less than God's truth—not, if it be well
To love this people; to have drawn the sword
For mercy's sake alone. I am not guilty!
(O God, call back her eyes' fast fading light,
Lest she die judging me.) I am not guilty!
Except in loving thee too well. My lips
Shall speak no more at the eternal judgment
Than this—

Eliz. 'Tis truth! It cannot be but truth.
All things seem different, yet just now I thought
To see more clearly, whilst I dar'd to judge him—
How happy am I now—forgive me, O
My father!

Crom. It has been, that I have shr
From noble consciousness of the good

For love of thee—seeing thee pine and faint,
Deeming thy parent guilty of much blood,
And great deeds for the small base thought of self:
Then, like the patriarch, I have cried aloud
Unto the Lord, rebelling thus against
His holy will. This is my darkest error.

Eliz. Now, let me comfort him and die in peace.
O father, 'tis another love that bends
This blighted form to earth.

Crom. Ha! What is this?
Thy husband!

Eliz. Fear not, I am pure in thought
And deed—yet I was married early,
Ere I had lov'd. I could not choose but love,
When I saw one—No matter—I am pure;
But death is welcome. Do not frown on me:
I ne'er had told thee but for comfort's sake,
Lest thou should'st think that thou had'st slain thy daughter.

Crom. Can this be true?
And she is dying thus!
Would I had known it sooner: ere, alas!
It was too late. Come, tell me everything.
[*He kneels down beside her.*

Eliz. Nay, let this thing go by; clasp me unto thee—
Forgive me all the pain that I have cost thee—
I feel as if I were again a child

That prattled by thy side, ere strife had come,
And sown those wrinkles in thy lofty brow—
Bend, till my faded fingers reach to smooth them!
I cannot think but of an evening walk,
When thou did'st tell me of the life of David,
And how he dwelt with God—'twas on the bench
Round the oak tree in the fair pasturage,
[*Organ plays.*
Behind the church!—see, see, yon archèd window
Is full of light. Hush, they are singing, hush!
The sun is cheerful! Nature praises God.
Leave me not yet, my father; spare one hour
Unto thy child. Nay, then, we shall meet soon.
Thou smil'st sweet Spirit, all the rest grows dim!
See by yon pale and monumental form,
The old man kneeling weeps. I come! I come!
[*Falls back and dies, her hands clasped in the attitude of a recumbent marble effigy. During the latter part, till the interruption, an organ is heard playing solemn music.*

Enter a servant; he makes a sign that some one is coming. CROMWELL *bows his head. Enter a* PHYSICIAN, LADY CROMWELL, *and Sisters.*

Phy. Doth she sleep?

Crom. Ay, tread softly, for the ground
Is holy—

Phy. [*Addressing the body.*] Lady!
Crom. He, she answereth,
Is there. [*Points above.*
Lady Crom. Dead! oh, Elizabeth!
Crom. Why griev'st thou, woman?
Rejoice with the angels rather.
Did I not hear
But now an organ?
[*To the Physician.*
Phy. 'Twas, I think, my lord,
Your secretary, Milton.
Crom. Let him come here.
[*Exit* PHYSICIAN. *During this time,* LADY CROMWELL *kneels by the body of her Daughter, whilst a curtain is drawn round the couch.*

CROMWELL'S BOAST.

Enter an OFFICER *in Naval Uniform with Despatches, and others.*

Offi. These to your Highness!
Crom. [*Tearing them open.*] From our admiral,
The gallant Blake. Another victory—
The Hollanders have yielded, that did late
Insult our English flag.
[*Shouting is heard without.*

Milton. [*Who has entered unperceived.*] Most humble tenders
From France and Spain await your Excellency.
Crom. Ay! we will treat anon.
Milton. The Turks have yielded
The traitor Hyde. The Vaudois, sav'd, are blessing
In their bright peaceful valleys, your great name,
First in their prayers to Heaven—
An Usher. Sir, there are messages
From various sects; the enfranchis'd Jews, and all,
Whose burdens you have lighten'd, pray to see you.
Crom. Let all come in. I need all grateful hearts
Around me now.

Enter an Officer with Ironsides.

Offi. [*Speaking softly*] My lord!
Crom. Speak out, I say!
Thou tear'st my heart-strings with thy whispering:
It is grown a habit here not wanted more.
Sir, will you hasten? Speak your message out.
I have no thought left, save for England's glory.
Offi. My lord, will't please you to receive these letters?
Dunkirk is ceded to the English crown.

Crom. Crown, sirrah?
Where did'st thou teach thy tongue that tinsel word?
Go, mend thy speech, although thou bear'st good tidings.

[*He walks to and fro.*

Had she but liv'd to hear this. Yet, O God,
Thy will be done!

[*To an officer.*

Now let the cannon speak,
And trumpets tell this news unto the nation.

[*Flourish of trumpets and cannon behind the scenes.*]

'Tis well! I'll make the name of England sound
As great, as glorious, with as full an echo,
As ever that of Rome in days of yore.
By distant shores, in every creek and sea,
Her fleets shall lend proud shadows to the waters,
While their loud salvos silence hostile forts
With luxury of daring. Englishmen
Shall carry welcome with their wanderings.
Her name shall be the world's great watchword, fram'd
To make far tyrants tremble, slaves, rejoicing,
Unlock their lean arms from their hollow breasts,
And good men challenge holy brotherhood,
Where'er that word of pride is heard around.

For this the shallow name of king be lost
In the majestic freedom of the age.
'Tis slaves have need of trappings for their lords.
By Heaven, I say, a score of kings, each back'd
By his mean date of twenty rotted sires,
Could do no more than this. I will be more
Than all these weak and hireling Stuarts. This
Let Time and England judge, as years roll on.
[*Flourish.*

From Vandyck; a Play of Genoa.

IMAGINATION.

Imagination! hateful, cherish'd curse,
Frenzy of noble minds, that ever mourn'st
The desolation of thy broken dreams,
Making man's life a living Sepulchre,
O'er which the Cypress stoops with weight of snow,
Thou, with loud burst of music, sendest forth
Thy hero unto battle—soon he falls:
For thou did'st whisper—*Armour shames the brave,*
A broider'd scarf befits thy tunic best—
And every bolt and arrow bites his breast:
Where then thy Moorish symphonies, thy flutes,
And soft recorders? trumpets' glorious cl·

Thy banners clasping light?—Fled into gloom.
Bleeding thy victim lies. Thou do'st but play
The dead-march of his soul. The sun-fring'd clouds,
On whose bright thrones his spirit sat entranc'd,
As in the East a conqueror diadem'd,
Black and opaque, hem in his freezing sight;
While the pale glimpses of distracted thought
Fitful reveal the heap'd and spectral ground,
Where Hope flies darkling, Love no more is found,
And Memory strips the dead and dying round.

THE PIRATE'S CAPTIVE.

ISORA, *brought to Genoa by the Pirate* ANTONIO, *who is enamoured of her, determines to escape from the vessel.*

ISORA, HAMET, AFTERWARDS ANTONIO.

Isora. At last 'tis done—
I shall escape soon from this hated spot
That takes me with it in its dread career:
This spot of blood upon the murky waves,
This cruel stain upon the bright, blue main:
I shall escape to fields and songs of birds;
Not like the poor things I have oft seen perch,
Lost from the land and gladness—to die here!

I shall escape, O God! and yet my heart
Is sadder than of old. Come hither, Hamet,
And sing to me. Oh! would that it might be
The last song here.

Hamet. SONG.

Have ye seen the Nautilus sail in
The moon-beam's silvery path,
While the stars around gleam pale in
Their deep blue tremulous bath?

Each a centre gem worn nightly
In a Sea-Nymph's coronet,
With cold lustre, yet so brightly
In her rippling dark hair set.

Come hither, my love, and we will sail
As well in the moonbeams soft and pale;
Thy bright eyes to me shall bring again
The peace that hath fled from the slumbering main.

Isora. It is Antonio's song, I like it not—
The moon is streak'd with blood that shines on him:
By Cuba's Isle he sang it, we were near
Anchor'd; 'twas night, and all was calm and still;
When from the forest rose a blood-hound's yell
His voice to echo in my shivering heart.

Hamet. Madam, I hear his footfall.

Enter ANTONIO, *singing a Catalonian air.*

Maiden, maiden, would'st thou marry?
Wed thee with bold Catalan:
When the red gold's spent, he'll harry
Moor and Turk and Mussulman.

[*To Isora.*] How doth fare
My ocean flower?

Isora. I am well, but fain
Would bloom on land, if that I be a flower;
To smile amid the waving grass on earth,
The sea a far thing heard of.

Antonio. Peace, girl, peace:
Thou wilt raise a storm.

[*Walks up and down playing with the hilt of his poniard*]

[*In a tone of softness.*] Tell me what song was that
I heard just now?

Hamet. 'Tis one my mistress likes not,
Noble El Matador.

Antonio. Curst be thy tongue,
Thou imp, to say so. Out, dog!

[*Exit* HAMET. *Before going out he makes a threatening gesture unseen.*]

[*To Isora.*] We are arriv'd
At Genoa.

Isora. [*Lying down listlessly.*]
I thought so by the sound
On deck. I have become by habit
A part of this loath'd vessel—

Antonio. Ay, thou art,
Thou art! but say not "loath'd" Isora, 'tis
Thine own, all, all, thine own, and I thy slave.
Doth not each sailor love the plank thy foot
Trips o'er in silent beauty 'neath the moon?
Have not their rude hands carv'd thine image on
The stem, thy lip curl'd to the coming wave
In scornful beauty? Art thou not their pride?

Isora. I know not, care not.

Antonio. They would die for thee!
Since when in Tangier Bay the rolling waves
In one short watch had swell'd to fury 'neath
The hot Levanter's still increasing roar,
And like a squadron charg'd upon the strand,
That bellow'd to their coming.
All did sleep,
All, e'en the watch on deck (whose sleep I made
Eternal) slumber'd. Even I had clos'd
Mine eyes from wine and revel—I, whom sleep
Doth visit rarely; but whene'er she comes,
Deep as the grave—
I started from a dream
Of tropic skies, and waving cocoa-trees;
A lov'd voice whisper'd in mine ear—*Antonio,*
Our anchor drags; we near the dim, low sands.—

Thou stood'st beside me, pale, but undismayed;
Thy garments dripping, feet unslipper'd—Oh!
I would have kiss'd them then in ecstasy.
Thy veil'd hair glitter'd with phosphoric fire:
Old Neptune flung his diamonds to thee, girl,
As he was hurried past our foaming side.
Thy face shone like a Saint's. I stay'd to say—
Wilt thou thus peril thy dear health, Isora?
Change thy wet robe.—Dost thou remember it?

Isora. [*Mournfully.*] I do! I do!

Antonio. I leapt on deck. I hurl'd
The wretch that perill'd thee into the foam;—
Without his lead-line.

Isora. [*Shuddering.*] No! No! Not for me.

Antonio. With my own hand I cut the surging hemp.
The seamen dash'd aloft, like swarming bees,
Lay out upon the pointed yards soon squar'd,
Their bare feet in the ropes—dost thou remember
Yusef? It was a brave lad: how he clung
All humpback'd with the rough and bellying wind,
'Neath his frock gather'd, outermost. I yell'd
Let go! above the din. Like a wild steed,
The canvass shook him off, and the last reef
His rapid fingers loos'd was his own life.
That moment from the yard to the sea it was
A short and merry leap. She caught it then;

The hissing water wash'd our guns out rarely:
She dipp'd to her fourth plank; as a fond wench
Doth stoop unto her lover. Thou wert there!
Brave footing for a pirate's bride, Isora.

Isora. [*Mechanically.*] A pirate's bride! I heard the poor boy cry.
He shrieked—*Isora follow!* Oft I hear
That cry, when through the dark shrouds wails the wind:
Last night three times it came.

Antonio. We saw the line
Of the white breakers closing nearer, like
Pale watch-fires of destruction lit around.
The looming mountains flung their shadows swart;
Like nets to draw us to them. By the light,
That lurid gleam'd, I saw each lip compress'd,
Save thine. The sailors swear till now they heard
Thy voice, and one responsive in sweet song
Far on our bows away. At length she stay'd!
Our gallant vessel stay'd! A shout arose,
That from the clouds drew echo.
Ere eight bells,
We beat from out the bay, and scudded on
The broad and free Atlantic! Was't a night?

Isora. A night of horror.

Antonio. Triumph! big-vein'd joy!
To lash the waves, to laugh the wind to scorn,

To follow, like the shark, in fortune's wake,
Dark glancing, with *our* double rows of teeth,
That bite full sharp—
[*His manner changing.*]
Thou never smilest now
On me, Isora. It was different once.

Isora. I lov'd you, till you spoke to me of love:
Nor fear'd you, till your passion bade me fear.
You were my brother, till you flung the name
Away, and found no other that I like.
When shall we land?

Antonio. Sangre de Dios—Never!

LOVE.

It is, I know not what: to give your soul
Into another's care, and read her eyes
Alone to learn its fate. To tremble at
The thought of change; like summer birds that doubt
Their summer, if a moment they have felt
One zephyr chill, or miss'd one early leaf
From the green forest's universal bloom;
Yet to believe like a blind man, whose steps
Are led by his own child; in joy to weep,
In grief to smile beside the one we love,
To anticipate all doubt, to hope and trust,

To have no thought apart, no soul between,
To think death friendly, if he came to both,
To bless the earth for life thus shar'd in bliss,
To put a girdle round the universe
With but an arm bent round a slender waist,
To loiter on a shore, while crisping waves
Beat in soft murmurs to the feet, at eve,
And feel no sadness, nor a wish beyond,
No strange impulsive thirst or weariness,
No pensive memories like departing ships
That glide on the horizon, and are gone,
E'en as we look. To wish for endless youth
But in the offspring of that sacred love;
Content to follow to the silent land
Love, that hath brought death's message gentlier:
Two human beings in one angel blent,
One star reflected in the eyes of both,
To smile back joy to Heaven.

THE BULL FIGHT.

Adorni. Then for your Bull-fights. Is it a Royal sport?

Antonio. One for the gods and goddesses! To see the black bull, with his crimson wounds, charge white-frothed in a tempest of fury, and the brave man await him calmly with the slight

bulwark of a scarlet mantle—the quick orb of his eye quivering like the magnetic needle, now pointing to the bull's fiery eye and now to the soft eye of his Andalusian love in the gallery, and so back again—never quitting the bull and yet never forgetting the maiden, and to hear the bull roar, and to note the man vanish, as if the bull had o'er-run a shadow in a slashed jerkin, and to listen to the maiden crying *Brave toro!* whilst her heart whispers *Braver matador!* and to mark the horse, with smoking nostril, reel masterless, till his own entrails, like a man's better feelings, o'ertrip him—then the fluttering of fans and the waving of kerchiefs, and the forgetfulness of hands that are straying round small waists, with a fond cousinship that a whole week's love-making at home had not mastered, and to behold the bull dragged forth motionless and his conqueror standing careless, with a dry brow, and his hair in spruce curl, as if he had just given the last flourish of the first coranto danced at his own wedding—

A TRIBUTE TO SHAKESPEARE.

VANDYCK—ADORNI.

Adorni. Have you not spoken of some wondrous lines,

By a great Island Poet, far from hence,
Who would have tranc'd the Sirens in their caves,
Had he liv'd then, so magical his song?
That bore the world within his wizard brain,
Where kings sat thron'd in greater majesty,
And children by Life's river stray'd and sung:
While Nature stopp'd to trick her features in
The mirror that he held, as if she sleek'd
Her tresses o'er an orient lake at morn,
And Art on tiptoe oft stole near to take
From him a lesson—

Vandyck. There liv'd such a one:
Fair Wisdom's Bridegroom, married to her young;
That dried the ink, wherewith he wrote, with sand
Shed from the hour-glass of admiring Time:
His birth alone had stamp'd the nation great
Where he was nurtur'd; for indeed he was
Humanity's bright essence. None e'er liv'd
Compeer to him, or will;—for he made all
His own, that is. Each month he lay within
His mother's womb, a several Muse did bear
Her sweetest company—thus was he fram'd
To such nice sympathies; and on the day
He first did stretch his dimpling finger tow'rd
Earth's waving flow'rs, Apollo left his throne
To visit him, and kiss'd his smiling brow
In seal of promise. That year laurels bloom'd
Before their time, in Britain.

THE COQUETTE.

VANDYCK—ADORNI.

Adorni. I know the sort of woman. She will break
A hundred hearts, and ne'er grow pale for one;
Her fresh looks feeding on consumption round:
If one died for her, she would ask his fate,
As if unconscious of the part she bore
In his sad doom, with pretty interest,
To win the heart of him relating it:
She would have *all* her prey, would spare a look
Of sex e'en for a lacquey, yet would have
The poor wretch scourg'd, if she but thought he dar'd
To think her—woman; and her tremulous eye
Scorns not distilment from a beggar's gaze;
E'en when a duke does homage.

Vandyck. Who is it
Count Brignola will marry?

Adorni. Nay, we shall hear.
A tigress is a beauteous animal:
She springs to kill. There is a fearful bound,
A fall, a groan, a gurgle! When the blood
Is lapp'd, half spilt, the creature seeks its den;
But a vain woman is more merciless:
Her lust of praise can ne'er be satisfied—

A moral vampire! Mark her crimson lip,
Her bright and cruel eye! She is indeed
The harlot of the soul, although her breasts
Upon the tombs of buried loves beneath
Like snow lie coldly drifted.
Vandyck. O sweet saint,
Pardon this sinner for his thoughts, and me
For hearing them.

THE BAY OF GENOA.

Vandyck. How fair this bay, my friend. I could imagine
That here, long since, the Gods held holiday,
And this the scene of their high pageantry;
Their amphitheatre the circling hills
Still rising round, as when each left his couch,
And the prolong'd day faded into even:
Where yonder castle frowns lay Jove sublime,
And bent his head towards the dimpling waves
Of the untroublous sea, whence sudden rose,
With flaunting flags that looked like painted clouds,
And antick faces and strange revelry,
And thousand wind-strung harps and winding conchs,
A mock sea-fight at Neptune's hoarse command.

REVENGE.

Revenge doth mock.
It is so keen a poison, that it slays
The wretch that mixes it with its black fumes,
In the same hour, as when the victim quaffs
The deadly cup. Like the tornado's blasts
Mysterious circling on the tropic seas,
Are the heart-storms of passion whirling back
With ten-fold fury to their breeding-place.

THE JUGGLER OF LIFE.

Adorni. This is meant for me. It is not altogether true; but——Well, I am ever full of promise; yet the blossom falls and the fruit sets not. I am like the juggling fellow in the streets, that wears the fillets. I walk to the four ends of the carpet I have laid down, and jerk my right arm towards the skies and garret windows, as if to say—*This is my plot.* Then do I wait with knuckles doubled in at the hips, and a smile dragged over my face which the sting of a wasp could not alter, until my small companion, Conscience, comes back with an empty hat from the collection. Whereupon I put on my loose coat, shoulder my box and carpet, and——via! I am

off with a serene countenance, amid the growling of the bystanders. So small a bribe hath virtue in this world.

VANITY OF KNOWLEDGE.

The soul but plays upon the body's nerves,
Like blue phosphoric beads that flash and roll
Through tangled sea-weed on a surf-beat shore;
Ere well they glitter, Darkness shakes them off
And waves her banners o'er the gulf of Time:
Whilst all our knowledge, like a serpent's eyes,
In some huge cavern lighting nought around,
Attracts us stumbling over dead men's bones,
Unto a deeper fall.

THE PIRATE'S GRIEF.

ANTONIO, VANDYCK, ISORA, *dead.—The Pirate's Vessel has been boarded and taken.*

Antonio. My voice is gone.
I could not bid them cut a rope away,
If hell boil'd 'neath our lee.

* * * *

[*To Gomez.*]
To the powder, quick! Await my signal—then—
[*Exit Gomez*

[*Approaching Isora.*]

Thou shalt go on shore, my love. Speak: 'tis not I—
Antonio is chang'd: he has grown mild—
Isora! answer me.

[*Puts his arm round her.*

The sailors sang;
And, gazing on their oars, pull'd gently all—
She slept, wrapp'd in my cloak, my arm around her;
While the moon made her look, as she doth now,
Pale, pale—I kiss'd her forehead as I pleas'd—
'Twas but a year ago.

[*Looks up to the deck.*]

Come on, come on!
The pirate is at bay, and mocks his foes.

[*To Vandyck*]

I had swept the deck of twice their numbers, but
A little while ago: now on the point
Of this good sword, there seems a ton of lead,
As heavy as my heart.

[*Flings his sword away.*]

Lie there and snap
Beneath a coward's tread—I need thee not—
Thou art useless at a marriage! Fare thee well!

[*Approaches the body of Isora.*

I would kiss her lips, but dare not, as I did,
When she slept in mine arms.

And art thou gone?
I had slain the world for thee. There's not a thing
Beneath the sky can fill Antonio's heart:
His youth is like a childless weak old man,
That haunts the grave-yard of a hospital,
To read death's log upon the tombs, and learn
The commonest age to die.
Come back, I have
A thousand things to say, I never thought
To speak before: they'll make thee love me now.
How cold her ear is. I have frighten'd thee;
But I'll be gentle as a lady's page,
Isora!
Hark! they come! Isora, fly!
Nay then, be dead as stone. Roar triumph, waves!
She cannot be another's.

TRUE CHOICE OF LOVE.

Why did I not love this one? She was mine,
And would have nurtur'd all my glowing thoughts,
Unselfish with soft fingers loosening oft
The tense and o'erwrought slender filaments,
By which the music of the delicate soul
Is strung to finest harmonies;—that else
Breaks under careless touch, or tuning rude:
I had worn a smile upon my bosom then,

A living portrait o'er my care-worn breast,
That, upward turn'd, had read my eyes alone,
To guide her winning actions, speech forethought—
She would have set her heart to beat with mine,
Like watches tim'd for some long perilous trip
Together, lest one fail—Our voyage, Life!

ISORA!

The diamond's light is from its setting fallen,
And all is dark within—The glow-worm's ray
Pluck'd from the sleeping lily's soft-lit bell,
That fades ere it awakens—She is dead!
And will not open to the morning beams
Of Hesperus, with all his golden train;
But sleeps in night, her white unjewell'd arm
Thrown all confiding round forgetfulness,
As 'twere a mother's neck!

* * * *

Death took her by the hand; and as they went,
Her garments flung mild lustre on the road
That leads to dusk oblivion's shadowy isle;
Whence she will wing her flight to endless Spring:
As when the moon o'er midnight ocean sheds
Her golden vesture broad inwove with light,

And paves the azure, soft, dark, gleaming sea
For angel embassies; as when the sun
Tears the white curtains of dissolving mist,
And beams upon his anxious, glowing bride,
In tearful darkness veil'd, and gently hid:
Lo! as she hasten'd hence, her shadow fell
O'er us on earth; but she took all our light;
And, like one after little while return'd,
She will pass, unquestion'd, into Paradise!

THE END.

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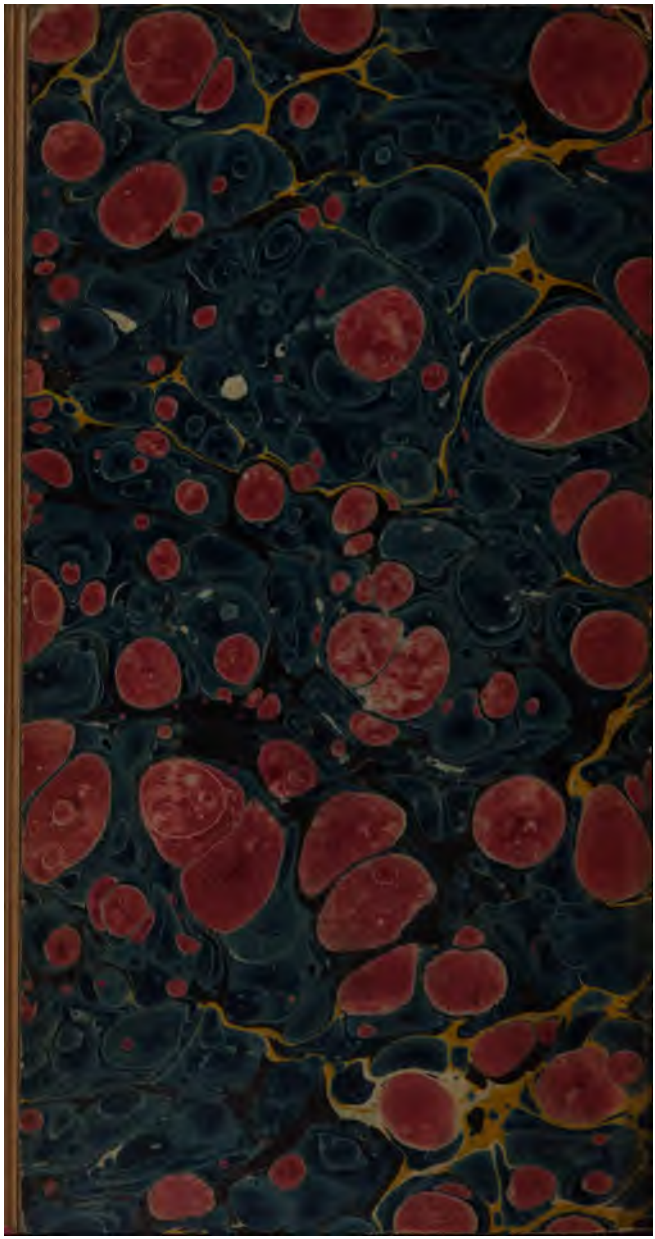
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